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COSMIC GHOST RIDER

BY DONNY CATES

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COSMIC GHOST RIDER

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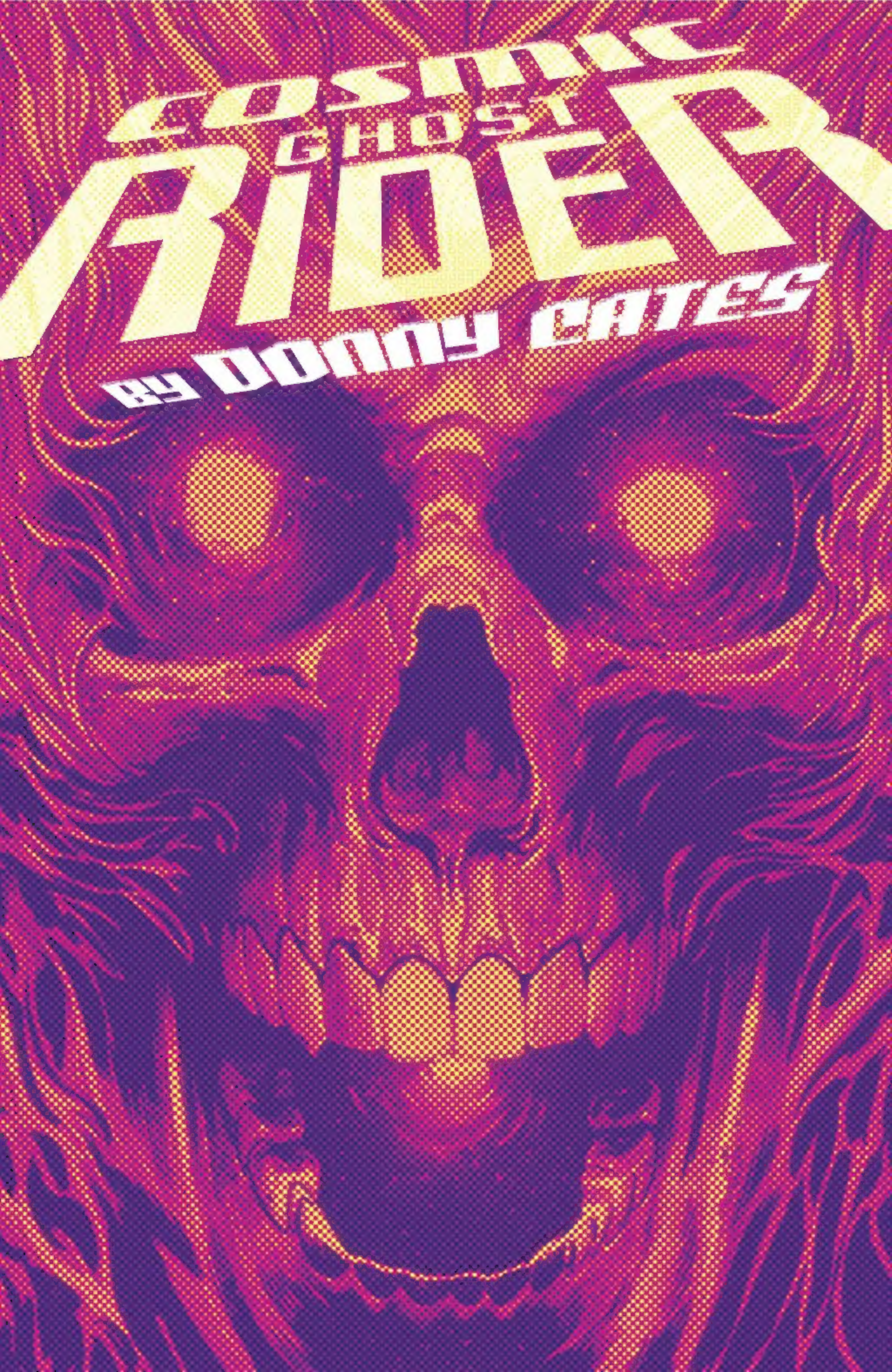

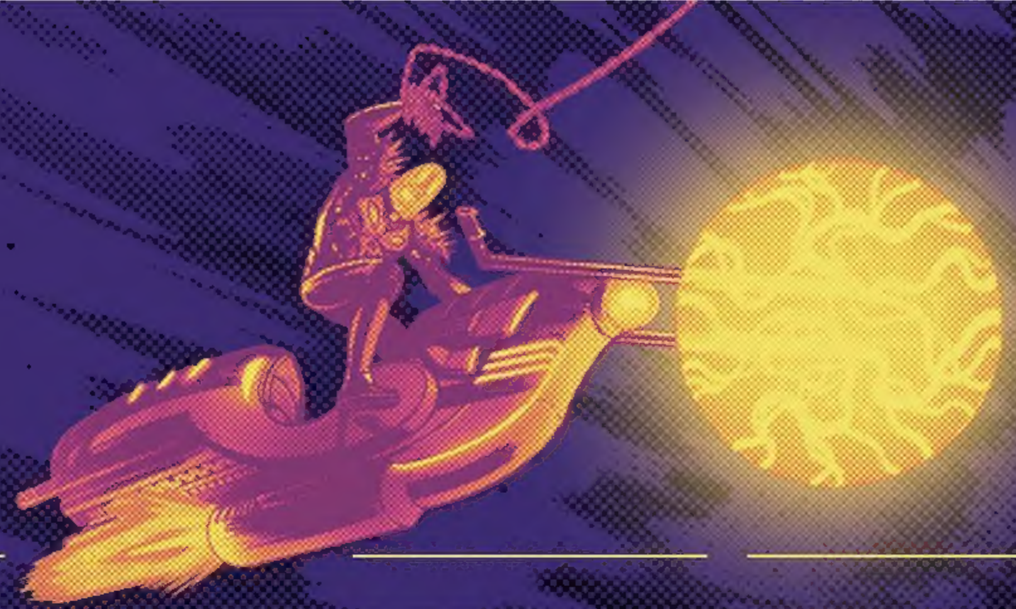

COSMIC GHOST RIDER by DONNY CATES

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"WHAT TO GET FROM THE MAN WHO TAKES EVERYTHING"

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THANOS #13

"THANOS WINS" PART 1

IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE, WITH ALL OF ITS ENDLESS WONDER AND POWER, THERE EXIST A SELECT FEW WHO ARE WIDELY AGREED UPON--BY THOSE WHO CALCULATE SUCH THINGS--TO BE THE MIGHTIEST BEINGS IN ALL OF EXISTENCE.

I AM VERY SURE YOU KNOW WHO THEY ARE.

HOWEVER, THERE IS SOMETHING **INSIDE** OF THESE CHAMPIONS THAT YOU **DO NOT KNOW.**

A SECRET TRUTH THAT EACH OF THEM CARRIES IN THE DARKEST AND MOST HIDDEN PARTS OF THEIR SOUL.

THE FEAR...THE CERTAINTY...THAT THEY WILL **LOSE.**

THAT SOMEDAY, DESPITE THEIR STRENGTH AND THEIR COURAGE... EVERYONE...AND EVERYTHING... **WILL DIE.**

AND IF YOU WERE TO ASK THESE **GODS,** THESE **AVENGERS** AND **DESTROYERS...** HOW THEY BELIEVE THIS MARVELOUS UNIVERSE OF OURS WILL ARRIVE AT THAT **BLOODY AND INEVITABLE END?**

WITH A TREMBLING VOICE, AND A HEAVY AND HONEST HEART...

...THEY WOULD ALL TELL YOU THE **EXACT SAME THING...**

THANOS WINS

A total obsession with power drives him to control the forces of the universe.

He is the Mad Titan. He is…Thanos.

FOR NOW, HOWEVER, WE FIND OURSELVES ON CHITAURI PRIME, THE APPROPRIATELY NAMED HOMEWORLD OF THE DESPOTIC CHITAURAN PEOPLE.

PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD OF THEM. THEY ARE TERRIFYING.

YOU WOULD KNOW THEM BY THEIR VAST ARMADA OF STOLEN AND REPURPOSED WARSHIPS-- EVERY ONE OF THEM EQUIPPED WITH A **FULL COMPLEMENT** OF THEIR SENTIENT, DEVOURER-CLASS, BURROWING TORPEDOES.

OR IF NOT THAT, **SURELY** YOU'VE HEARD TELL OF **THE LEVIATHANS:** THE CHITAURI'S SIGNATURE BRAND OF WEAPONIZED, BIOMECHANICALLY ENGINEERED ACANTI-STARSHARK HYBRIDS...

...EACH OF WHICH HOUSES HUNDREDS OF CHITAURAN SOLDIERS PILOTING LIGHTWEIGHT ECLIPSE-DRIVE ATTACK SKIFFS CAPABLE OF OUTMANEUVERING A SHI'AR CORVETTE.

EVERYONE KNOWS THESE THINGS.

BUT THE TRUEST OF THEIR HORRORS LIES BELOW.

DUE TO ITS UNUSUAL AND ERRATIC ORBIT, THE SURFACE OF CHITAURI PRIME IS SEVERAL HUNDRED DEGREES BELOW FREEZING FOR YEARS AT A TIME.

THE CHITAURI DO NOT SEEM TO MIND.

IN FACT, DURING THEIR INFAMOUS GLADIATORIAL CONTESTS, THE BLOOD SPRAY THAT ERUPTS FROM THE VARIOUS ENSLAVED COMBATANTS WILL OFTEN FREEZE IN MIDAIR...

...CREATING SMALL FLURRIES OF BEAUTIFUL RED SNOWFLAKES.

THE TINY BUNDLES OF **WAR SNOW**, AS THEY CALL IT, ARE COLLECTED AND GIVEN TO THE CHITAURAN CHILDREN TO EAT...

...A FITTING FIRST STEP ON THEIR PATH TO JOINING AN ANCIENT LINE OF WARRIOR **BUTCHERS** THAT HAVE CARVED THE UNCONQUERABLE NAME OF **CHITAURI PRIME** ACROSS THE STARS FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

THANOS HAD ALL BUT FORGOTTEN THE CHITAURI UNTIL HE HAPPENED UPON THEIR PLANET FIVE HOURS AGO.

WHO IS YOUR KING?

I AM. I AM THE KING, LORD THANOS...

LIAR.

NO...NO, I SWEAR! PLEASE, I CAN GIVE YOU--

CRSH

KINGS DO NOT BEG.

THUS FAR, HE IS RATHER UNIMPRESSED.

THANOS HAD COME TO THIS PLANET IN HOPES OF A FIGHT. A **CHALLENGE.** IN LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS, HE HAD FOUND HIMSELF GREATLY IN NEED OF SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL TO BREAK.

HE WILL SETTLE, HE SUPPOSES, FOR A NEW THRONE...

THA-NOS! THA-NOS! THA-NOS!

...AND AN ARMY.

THA-NOS! THA-NOS! THA-NOS!

LORD THANOS, I AM--

NO ONE.

AH...YES...IF IT PLEASES YOU, MY LORD...

NO ONE WOULD LIKE LORD THANOS TO KNOW THAT THE LEVIATHAN FRIGATES, THE WARSHIPS AND THE SOLDIERS YOU WERE MERCIFUL ENOUGH TO LET LIVE ARE NOW UNDER YOUR FULL AND UNCONTESTED COMMAND

AT LAST...THE *GLORY.*

YOU...AH, YOU, OF COURSE, HAVE OUR COMPLETE SURRENDER.

AND YET I AM STILL *TORTURED* BY YOUR CLUCKING TONGUE.

WELL, AH, MY LORD, I WAS...CURIOUS IF--AAGH!

WHAT?!

KRAK

...WHAT IN THE HELL DO YOU WANT?!

NO ONE... WONDERED...IF PERHAPS_

CRK

...YOU WOULD TELL *YOUR GOD*...TO STOP KILLING US?

MY WHAT?

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND. DO...DO YOU NOT KNOW?

LORD THANOS, IT--IT APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE...IT'S BEEN BURNING THROUGH OUR DEFENSES FASTER THAN OUR SYSTEMS CAN TRACK... FASTER THAN... EVEN *YOU*...

IT MOVES LIKE...LIKE *THE PHOENIX*...WE... WE ASSUMED THAT--

MY LORD?

MY LORD...ARE YOU *SMILING*?

HE IS.

BECAUSE AS COSMIC FIRE BURNS AND HOWLS IN THE ATMOSPHERE ABOVE...

...THE RED SNOW TURNS TO RAIN...

...AND AS IT FALLS, IT BRINGS WITH IT A FAMILIAR AND BEAUTIFUL SCENT.

AND SO, YES, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME...THANOS SMILES.

FOR WHATEVER THIS CREATURE IS THAT ROARS THROUGH THE STARS TOWARD HIM...

...IT REEKS OF DEATH.

HAHAHA!

BLAAAAAA

BOOAAAH

BOOM!!

ROOOAAAH

THIS, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW...

FOR THE GLORY OF OUR LORD THANOS! YOU WILL NOT CRO--

...IS THE GHOST RIDER.

ROOOAAAH

ALBEIT ONE UNLIKE ANY YOU HAVE EVER KNOWN.

HE IS THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE, BORN OF HELLFIRE AND BRIMSTONE.

ROOOAAAH

BOOM

HE IS ALSO A FORMER HERALD OF GALACTUS, IMBUED WITH STAGGERING COSMIC POWER.

AND, PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, HE IS THE BLACK RIGHT HAND OF THE FINAL KING.

ROOOOAAAAH

IF THAT LAST TITLE DOESN'T MEAN MUCH TO YOU, WORRY NOT.

IT WILL SOON MEAN A GREAT DEAL.

IN SHORT, IT MEANS HE IS FROM THE FUTURE.

HEY!

I SHOULD ALSO MENTION HE IS QUITE INSANE.

I'M, UH— I'M GONNA NEED YOU TO COME WITH ME, OKAY, PAL?

PAT PAT

AH, @#%&. YOU'RE GONNA WANT TO FIGHT, HUH?

ALL RIGHT, NOW I ADMIT I CAME IN A LITTLE HOT WITH THE RAIN-OF-BLOOD THING, RIGHT? BUT LOOK, I'M JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS HERE, OKAY? I'M SUPPOSED TO BRING YOU IN, NOT--

YOU TELL MEPHISTO IF HE WISHES AN AUDIENCE WITH THANOS OF TITAN, HE SHOULD HAVE SENT--

MEPHISTO?

YOU ARE A RIDER. A PAWN OF HELL.

MAN, I AIN'T BEEN TO HELL IN *FOREVER*. NOW, HEY, COME ON...

JUST...BACK IT UP A LITTLE, YEAH? I KNOW YOU KINDA DEFAULT TO MURDERING PEOPLE WITH YOUR FISTS, BUT THAT AIN'T GONNA WORK HERE, OKAY?

AND, HONESTLY, IF I HAVE TO KILL YOU, IT'S GONNA @#&% UP THE WHOLE TIMELINE, AND I'LL HAVE TO--

BWAAAHHH

DIE.

AGH!

ALL RIGHT, THIS ONE IS ON ME... I DIDN'T DO A GOOD JOB EXPLAINING THINGS...

FIRSTLY, THOSE CHAINS WERE FORGED FROM THE BONES OF CYTTORAK. SO DON'T HURT YOURSELF TRYING TO WIGGLE ABOUT.

SECONDLY...

...I HAVE A PIECE OF THE *TIME STONE.*

NO...

YEAH, SO, YOU WANNA @#&% AROUND AND START THROWIN' EYE LASERS?

I PAUSE TIME AND WRAP YOU IN CHAINS FORGED FROM THE BONES OF CYTTORAK.

NOW, THE TIME GEM AIN'T ALL IT USED TO BE... SO BEFORE I CAN OPEN A GATE TO WHERE WE NEED TO BE, I GOTTA CHARGE IT UP WITH THE OL' POWER COSMIC.

I'D TELL YOU TO HANG ON...BUT... WELL...

BOOM

OH, THANK GOD.

THE GHOST RIDER IS, AND HAS BEEN, MANY THINGS. IN FACT, WHEN HE WAS STILL ALIVE, YOU MAY HAVE EVEN KNOWN HIM BY ANOTHER NAME.

BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT HE IS NOT, IN FACT, A LIAR...

...BECAUSE AS HIS COSMIC ENGINES ROAR TO LIFE...THE INFINITY STONE IN HIS SKELETAL FIST BEGINS TO GLOW ONCE MORE...

...AND IN BUT A BLINK OF AN EYE, WE ARE TRANSPORTED...

_TO THE INEVITABLE.

EARTH.

MILLIONS OF YEARS FROM NOW.

SKREEEEECH

AGH!

YOU...

...YOU DO NOT WALK AWAY FROM ME!

DO YOU HEAR ME, RIDER?!

I DO. WEIRD, RIGHT?

NO EARS.

YOU DRAG ME ACROSS THE STARS TO MAKE JOKES?! FACE ME, YOU COWARD!

I WILL KILL ANY WHO OPPOSE ME!

HERE YA GO, BOSS!

LOOK AT HIM GO...SUCH A TEMPER...

YEAH, I DON'T THINK HE'S WILD ABOUT THE CHAINS.

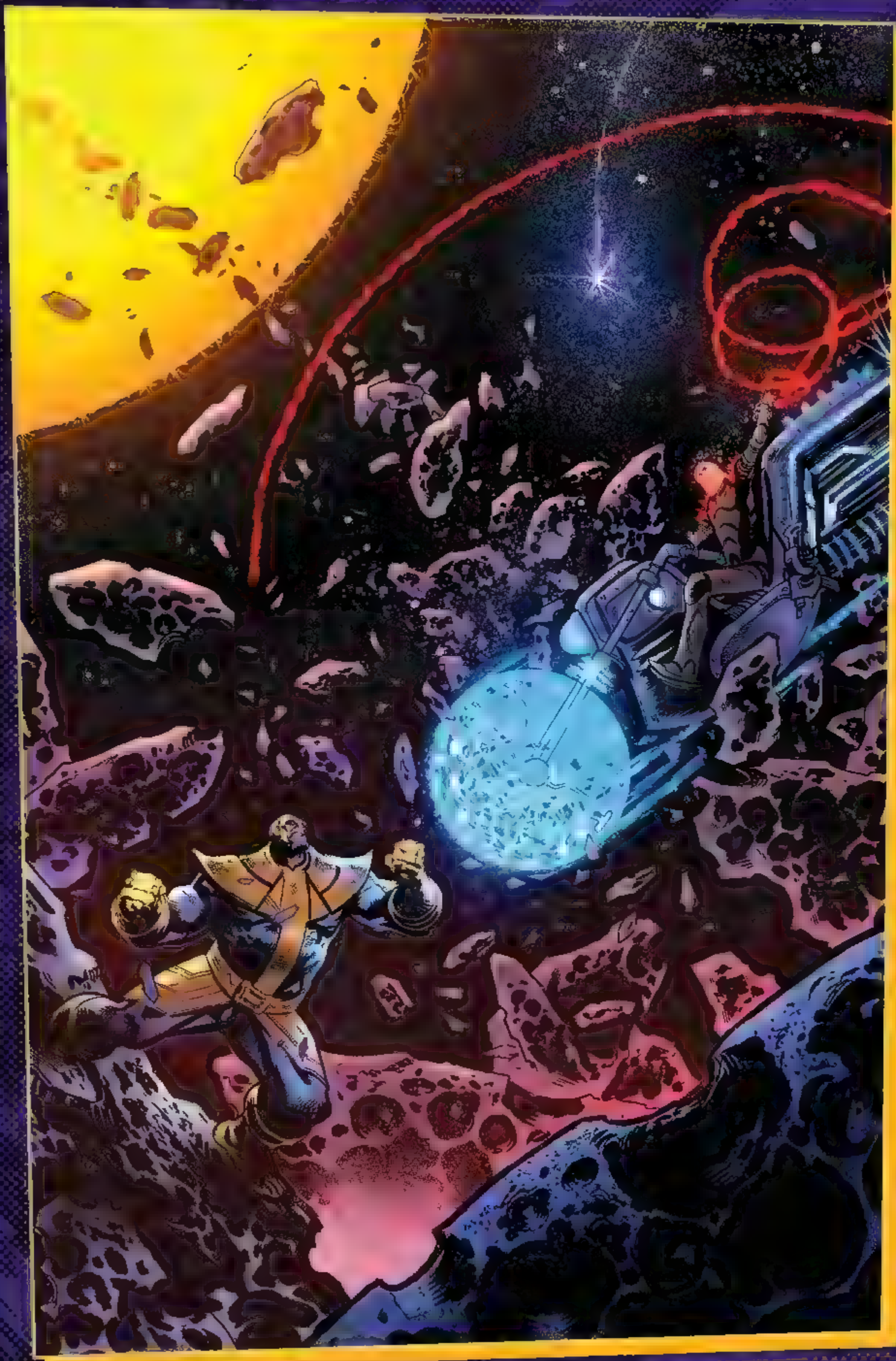
I AM THANOS!

HAHA! YES, YOU CERTAINLY ARE...

...BUT I AM AFRAID THERE IS NO ONE HERE TO OPPOSE YOU, BOY.

DO YOU SEE NOW?

YOU'VE ALREADY WON...



THANOS #14

"THANOS WINS" PART 2

IN THE EYES OF INFINITY, A BEGINNING AND AN ENDING ARE ALMOST ENTIRELY INDISCERNIBLE.

THE EXPLOSION THAT ENDS ONE UNIVERSE GIVES BIRTH TO ANOTHER.

THE DINOSAURS WENT EXTINCT THE VERY SAME SECOND THE ASTEROID THAT ENDED THEM SPUN OUT OF ITS ORBIT.

A MAN WHO DIES FROM A GUNSHOT WOUND WAS DEAD THE MOMENT THE BULLET WAS CREATED.

THESE EVENTS, THOUGH HOURS OR EVEN MILLIONS OF YEARS APART, HAPPEN IN THE SPAN OF A HUMMINGBIRD'S HEARTBEAT IN THE EYES OF THE INFINITE.

TIED TOGETHER ON A COURSE PLOTTED BY DESTINY.

OR PERHAPS BY DOOM.

IT IS IN THIS WAY OF THINKING THAT THE UNIVERSE AS YOU KNOW IT ENDED THE DAY THANOS WAS BORN.

THE END OF ALL THINGS OCCURRED ON A WEDNESDAY SOME FORGOTTEN CENTURIES AGO ON A SMALL MOON OF SATURN CALLED TITAN.

AGGGHHH!

THANOS WAS BORN TO A RACE OF ETERNALS. BUT FOR SOME UNTOLD REASON, HE ARRIVED_DIFFERENT.

THEY CALLED HIM A MUTANT. A DEVIANT

THEY SAY HIS MOTHER, SUI-SAN WAS HER NAME, WENT INSANE THE MOMENT SHE LAID HER EYES ON HIM... BUT THIS IS NOT ENTIRELY TRUE...

SHE LOST HER MIND WHEN SHE FIRST SPOKE HIS NAME.

...THANOS...

THANOS WAS NOT THE NAME SHE HAD PLANNED ON GIVING THE CHILD. YET WHEN SHE LOOKED INTO HIS PITCH-BLACK EYES_SHE SPOKE IT AT ONCE.

SHE HAD NEVER HEARD THE NAME BEFORE.

AND IF YOU WERE TO ASK HER WHERE IT CAME FROM, SHE WOULD TELL YOU THAT A COLD WIND WHISPERED IT INTO HER EAR.

SHE WOULD ALSO TELL YOU THAT GOING MAD IS A PERFECTLY REASONABLE REACTION TO STARING INTO THE EYES OF A UNIVERSAL CONSTANT.

YOU WOULD GO MAD TOO IF YOU GAVE BIRTH TO A GOD.

ANYWAY, THANOS KILLED HER WHEN HE WAS TWELVE.

FROM THERE, THINGS RATHER... ESCALATED.

AS HE GREW, THANOS BEGAN TO ALTER AND EXPERIMENT ON HIS DEVIANT BIOLOGY. INCREASING HIS STRENGTH, HIS INTELLECT... AND HIS CRUELTY.

AND THEN...WELL, I AM SURE THERE IS VERY LITTLE NEED TO REMIND YOU OF THANOS' VARIOUS QUESTS FOR UNIVERSAL DOMINATION.

THE INFINITY CRUSADES. THE ANNIHILATION WARS.

THE PROPHECIES AND CONQUESTS.

ALLIANCES, BETRAYALS, DEFEATS...

AND DEATH.

ALWAYS. ALWAYS, THERE WAS DEATH.

THE FUTURE.

BUT DEATH NEVER CAME FOR THANOS.

SO AS THE EARTH'S HEROES AND CHAMPIONS WILTED, OLD AND WEAK, AROUND HIM...

...THANOS ONLY GREW STRONGER.

HE BECAME, FINALLY, WHAT HE WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE...

YOU SEE, FOR EONS, THANOS HAS BEEN CALLED "MAD."

LABELED AN ABERRATION, A MUTANT, A DEVIANT EVIL.

BUT PERHAPS THE TRUTH IS THAT THANOS IS NO MORE ABERRANT THAN THE ASTEROID THAT KILLED THE DINOSAURS.

HE IS NO MORE EVIL THAN A CANCER CELL.

AND HE IS NO MADDER THAN HIS MOTHER BEFORE HIM.

THE PHOENIX BURNS.

GALACTUS DEVOURS.

THE WATCHERS WITNESS.

THE CELESTIALS JUDGE.

THANOS LIVES.

THANOS DENIES.

SNK

THANOS WINS.

AND SO, ON THE RUINS OF THE WORLD BEFORE, THANOS BIRTHED A NEW ONE IN ITS STEAD. FROM AN ENDING...

...A NEW BEGINNING.

FROM THE BONES OF THE CELESTIALS HE BUILT A TEMPLE TO LIVE OUT THE REMAINDER OF HIS INFINITE LIFE IN SILENCE.

SAVE FOR THE ODD SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE, OF COURSE.

(HOW THAT BIZARRE ALLIANCE CAME TO BE IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME...)

BUT THAT IS HOW IT HAS BEEN FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS NOW.

THE MIGHTY THANOS ON HIS GREAT DEVOURER THRONE.

LORD OF ASH. KING OF NOTHING.

VICTORIOUS. UNCONTESTED...

...AND ALONE.

AND THEN, SUDDENLY...

BOOM

...THERE WAS THANOS.

I DO NOT CARE WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE, PRETENDER... BUT KNOW THIS...

THANOS WILL BE PUT IN CHAINS, DRAGGED TO HIS KNEES AND DISRESPECTED BY NO ONE.

I DID NOT BRING YOU HERE TO FIGHT ME, BOY!

THEN YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE BROUGHT ME.

AND I WILL NOT BE CALLED BOY!

WHOA, BIG FELLA!

YOU...

ALL RIGHT, LOOK, FRIEND, ALL CARDS ON THE TABLE HERE. YA CAN'T KILL ME.

I'M ABOUT AS DEAD AS IT GETS, SO LET'S JUST CALM DOWN AND BE RATIONAL BECAUSE ALL OF THIS TIME-TRAVEL @#&% IS ALREADY CONFUSING AS @#&% AND THIS AIN'T--

INTERESTING.

GAH!

I WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO *TEST* THIS THEORY OF YOURS ABOUT DEATH.

THOUGH OUR YOUNGER THANOS HERE HAS NOT YET WITNESSED A FRACTION OF THE HORRORS AND GLORY THAT HIS OLDER SELF HAS, HE IS STILL THANOS.

NO! PLEASE!

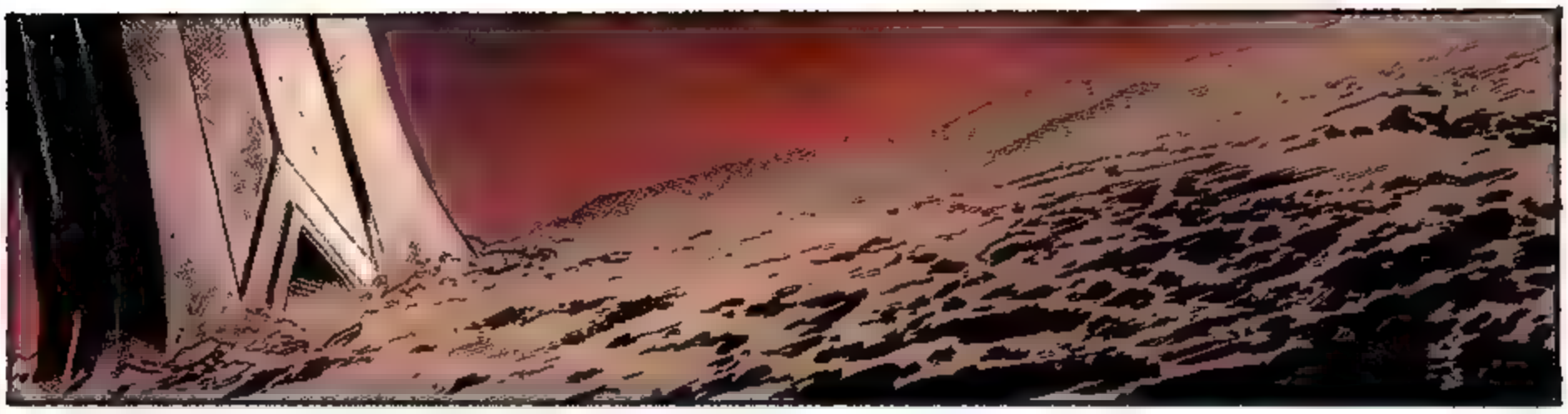
..."PLEASE"?

AND AS SUCH HE HAS ALREADY COMMITTED SUCH MAD AND HORRIFIC ACTS THAT YOU WOULDN'T THINK THERE WAS A SINGLE SIGHT LEFT IN EXISTENCE THAT WOULD SHOCK HIM...

YOU WOULD BE WRONG.

PLEASE...

...I NEED YOUR HELP.



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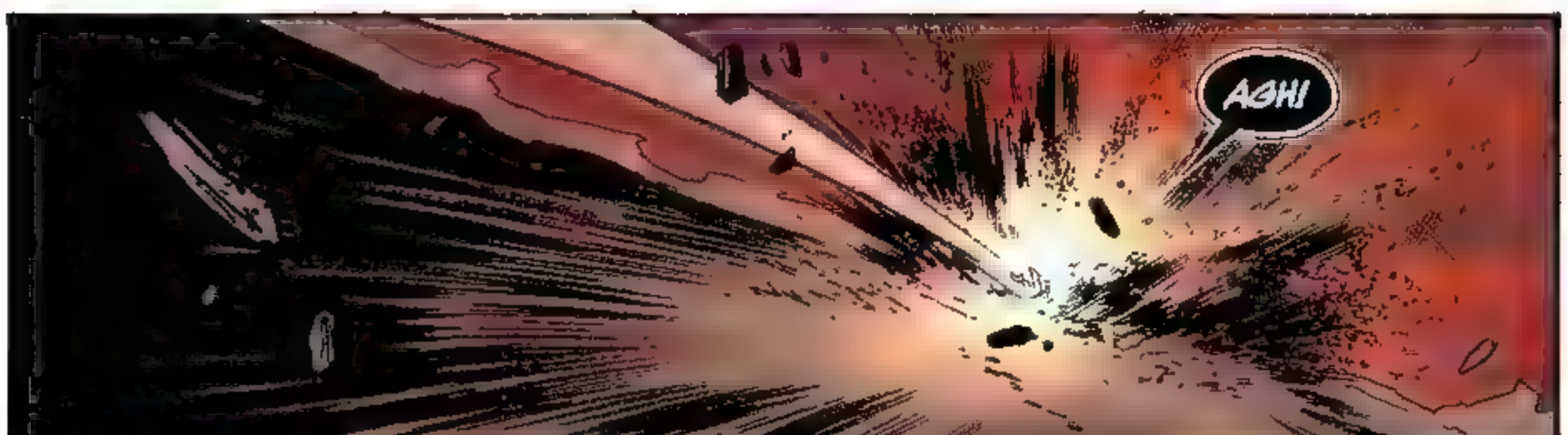
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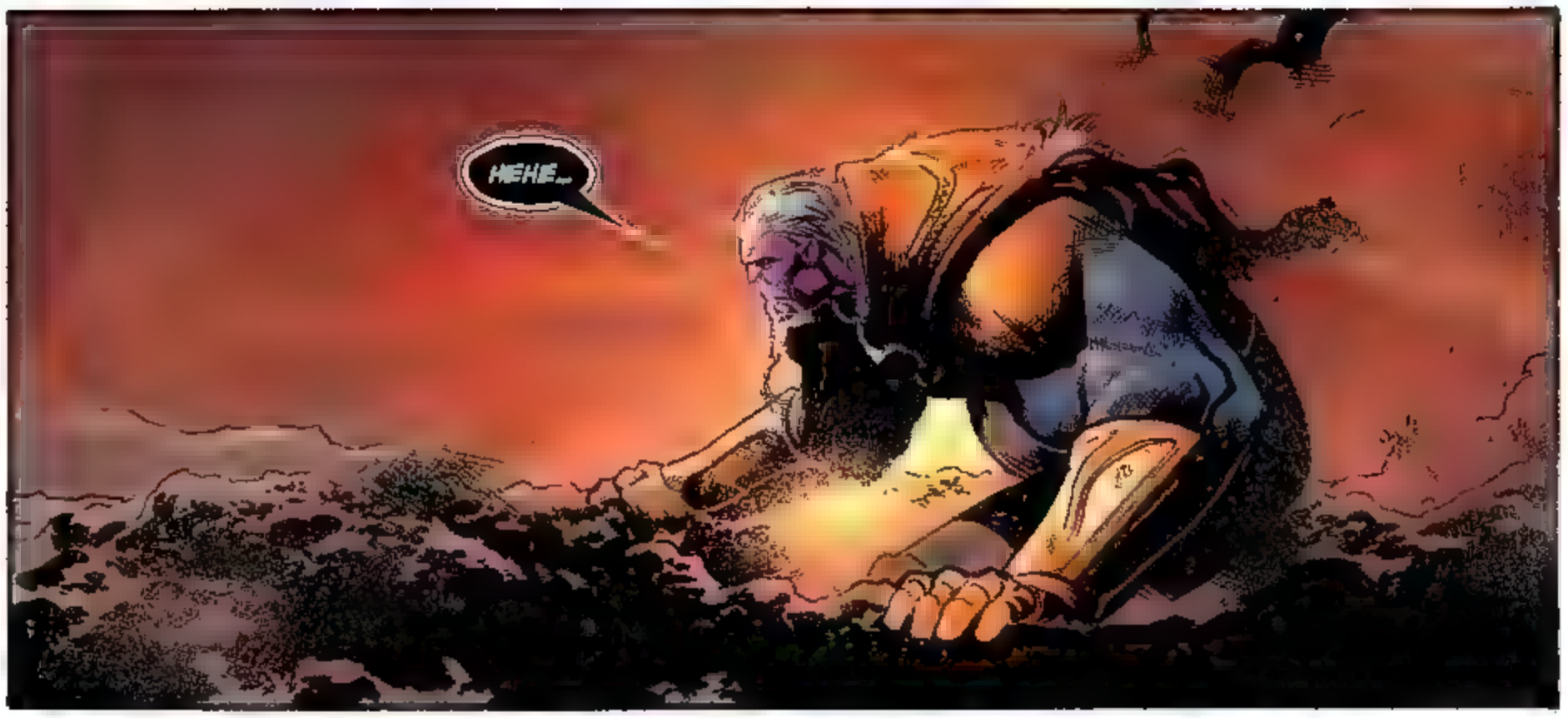

HEHE...

MAGNIFICENT.

WHO ARE YOU?!

YOU WEAR THAT FACE AND THAT TITLE AND YET THE WORD "PLEASE" COMES FROM YOUR MOUTH?!

YOU BEG?!

AGH!

YOU ARE NO KING!

YOU ARE NO THANOS!

GRAGHH!

BWAM BWAM BWAM

IF THERE WERE ANY DOUBT LEFT IN OUR YOUNG THANOS THAT THE MAN IN FRONT OF HIM WAS TRULY HIMSELF SEPARATED BY MILLIONS OF YEARS...

...IT WAS ERASED WITH THE HEAT OF THE **POWER COSMIC** BURNING THE AIR IN HIS LUNGS...

YOU TALK TOO MUCH...

...AND THE SOUND OF HIS **TRUE NAME**, THE ONE HIS MOTHER HAD CHOSEN FOR HIM BEFORE HER MIND HAD BEEN SHATTERED.

...DIONE.

A NAME SHE HAD SPOKEN ONLY TO HIM...

...ON THE DAY THAT SHE DIED.

AND IT WAS WITHIN THAT MOMENT...THAT VERY MINISCULE INSTANT IN TIME WHERE THANOS CHOSE TO ALIGN WITH HIMSELF...

...THAT ETERNITY, AS YOU KNOW IT, WAS DOOMED.

WHAT DO YOU NEED MY HELP WITH?

I LOST SOMEONE.

I NEED YOU TO HELP ME GET THEM BACK...

WHO?

WHO DO YOU THINK?

THANOS #15

"THANOS WINS" PART 3

THE GHOST RIDER'S PENANCE STARE IS SAID TO BE THE GREAT DEMONIC EQUALIZER.

FOR NO MATTER HOW LARGE THE SIN, OR HOW POWERFUL THE SINNER, TO STARE INTO THE GAZE OF THE RIDER IS TO KNOW ABSOLUTE SORROW AND DESPAIR.

IT DELIVERS BACK UPON THOSE WHO FALL UNDER ITS THRALL EVERY MOMENT OF TORTURE AND PAIN ITS VICTIM HAS UNLEASHED UPON THE INNOCENT.

FOR MANY, THE RIDER'S PENANCE IS THE LAST THING THEY EVER SEE.

FOR SO POWERFUL IS THE REGRET, AND SO HEAVY IS THE WOE, THAT THEY CARVE OUT THEIR OWN EYES...

...LEST THEY EVER SLEEP, OR BE FORCED TO SEE INTO THEIR OWN SHRIVELED BLACK HEARTS, EVER AGAIN...

BUT THEN, OF COURSE, THERE IS THANOS.

FOR HIM, IT REVEALS ACTS SO VILE AND WRETCHED THAT WE CANNOT EVEN BEAR TO SHOW THEM TO YOU HERE.

FOR THEY ARE HIS HIDDEN THINGS. HIS DARKEST DEEDS. THINGS SO... HEINOUS THAT IF YOU WERE TO WITNESS THEM, YOU WOULD (AND PERHAPS SHOULD) STOP READING THIS TALE OF OURS AT ONCE.

YES. FOR THANOS, THE STARE IS A COLD REMINDER OF THE UNCOUNTED LIVES HE HAS DESTROYED AND LEFT UNBURIED IN THE PURSUIT OF HIS ONE TRUE LOVE.

AN ENDLESS BLACK SYMPHONY COMPOSED BY HANDS AND TEETH THROUGH TIME.

A LOVE LETTER WRITTEN IN BLOOD AND THEN SPILLED, UNREAD AND UNWANTED, ACROSS THE STARS.

FOR OUR MAD TITAN, THE GHOST RIDER'S PENANCE STARE IS THE MOST HAUNTING SPIRITUAL JOURNEY HE WILL EVER ENCOUNTER...

BUT NOT FOR THE REASONS YOU MAY THINK. YOU SEE, THESE ARE NOT THANOS' DARKEST SECRETS AND REGRETS...

NO, FOR HIM...

...THEY ARE HIS FONDEST MEMORIES.

BEAUTIFUL.

EXHILARATING, IS IT NOT?

IT IS. YOU DO THIS EVERY MORNING?

YES.

MMMM, I SEE WHY YOU KEEP THIS IDIOT DEMON AROUND.

Y'KNOW, I CAN STILL HEAR YOU.

SO, TELL ME, KING THANOS... WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?

HEY, COME ON, MAN! BE CAREFUL, YA [illegible]—

NOW, WE HAVE BREAKFAST.

NO.

AH...

THAT SEAT IS TAKEN.

SO, WHERE IS SHE, THEN?

MMM... I DO NOT KNOW.

SURELY YOU DID NOT DRAG ME ACROSS TIME IN AN EFFORT TO PLAY AT RIDDLES. IF YOU KNOW SOMETHING, SPIT IT OUT OR STOP WASTING--

I HAVE KILLED ALMOST EVERY LIVING THING IN THE KNOWN GALAXY, BOY!

I HAVE GIVEN HER... EVERYTHING. BUT... STILL...

THERE IS YET ONE BEING THAT HAS ELUDED ME. ONE FINAL FOE. I HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE TO HELP ME KILL THIS THING.

ONLY THEN WILL SHE COME TO ME. ONLY THEN WILL SHE BE MINE.

AND JUST WHO IS THIS FOE?

WHO COULD POSSIBLY STIR SO MUCH FEAR IN THE HEART OF THE GREAT KING TITAN THAT HE WOULD RIP TIME APART TO ASK FOR HELP?

THE FALLEN ONE.

YOU...

...CANNOT BE SERIOUS.

YOU BROUGHT ME ALL THIS WAY TO HELP YOU FIGHT SOME FORGOTTEN HERALD?

CAREFUL... I CERTAINLY DID NOT BRING YOU HERE TO ARGUE WITH ME, BOY.

THE FALLEN ONE IS NEAR.

AT ITS CURRENT SPEED, IT WILL ARRIVE TONIGHT, SHORTLY AFTER THE SUN FALLS.

I MUST PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE COMING BATTLE.

WAIT, YOU WILL EXPLA--

I SUGGEST YOU DO THE SAME.

HEY, UH... LOOK, HE GETS LIKE THAT. DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY, BIG GUY.

OH! HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT?

I GOTTA GO FEED THE DOG. YOU WANNA COME WITH?

SNAP

I AM CURIOUS...

IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE RIDER ONLY PUNISHED THE WICKED. YOU SEEM A RATHER...ODD COMPANION FOR ME.

I DO NOT.

YEAH, WELL, YOU SIT IN A BARBER CHAIR LONG ENOUGH YER GONNA GET A HAIRCUT, YOU KNOW?

RIGHT. I, UH--I JUST MEAN...YEAH, I USED TO ONLY PUNISH BAD GUYS...

BUT, Y'KNOW, HANGING AROUND YOU FOR AS LONG AS I HAVE...

...IT CHANGES YOU.

I MEAN, EVERYONE'S GOT A LITTLE DARKNESS IN 'EM RIGHT?

OOF, YOU SHOULDA HEARD THE @#&% THAT CAME OUTTA STEVE ROGERS' MOUTH WHEN WE FED HIM TO THE DOG HERE... MAN, OH, MAN--

...ROGERS?

--OR LIKE, HELL, TAKE ME, RIGHT?

K-KILL?

I USED TO BE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT GUY. ALL BROODY AND DARK AND MYSTERIOUS-- LIKE, REAL DOWNER.

IF YOU'D MET ME BACK IN THE DAY, YOU WOULDA NEVER RECOGNIZED ME. AND I DON'T JUST MEAN BECAUSE OF ALL THE MELTED FACE, FLAMING SKULL STUFF, NEITHER.

SOME TIME IN HELL, A FEW HUNDRED YEARS AS A HERALD OF GALACTUS, AND A COUPLE MILLION MORE HANGING OUT WITH YOU... IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE A FELLA GO PRETTY HILARIOUSLY INSANE.

KILL... HULK?

RIDER... DO I...KNOW YOU?

AH, @AH, LOOK HOW RUDE I'M BEING...

FRANK CASTLE.

I DO NOT KNOW THE NAME.

???! FIGURES.

ARE YOU WATCHING, MY LOVE?

DO YOU SEE WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR YOU? DO YOU SEE WHAT I AM PREPARED TO KILL TO BE--

OLD MAN!

ENOUGH! THANOS WAITS FOR NO ONE!

NOT EVEN THANOS!

YOU LEAVE ME TO PLAY ERRAND BOY WITH YOUR FOOL SERVANT WHILE YOU LAZE AWAY PLAYING DRESS-UP IN SOME--

SILENCE!

I HAVE SUFFERED MORE THAN ENOUGH OF YOUR IMPATIENCE AND DISRESPECT IN MY OWN HALLS, BOY!

BUT NOT HERE! NOT IN HER TEMPLE!

ONE MORE INSOLENT WORD FROM YOU AND I WILL OPEN YOUR THROAT AND KILL US BOTH.

THIS IS SURTUR'S TWILIGHT. THE SWORD OF DOOM.

IT CERTAINLY USED TO BE.

I SEE MY TEMPER BURNS AS EVER IN MY DODDERING OLD AGE.

ON OCCASION, YES. THE EDGE OF WAR IS ALMOST UPON US. AND I AM...

SCARED?

ANXIOUS TO BE RID OF YOU.

...I DO APOLOGIZE FOR MY TONE, LORD THANOS.

IT'S JUST THAT YOU ARE RATHER A DISAPPOINTMENT TO ME. SURELY YOU MUST UNDERSTAND...

...I COME FROM A TIME WHERE I HAVE RENOUNCED THE BLACK LADY. I AM NO LONGER HER FOOL. AND TO COME HERE AND SEE YOU STILL PINING AFTER--

HA!

IS THAT RIGHT? TELL ME THEN, WHEN YOU LOOKED INTO THE RIDER'S EYES THIS MORNING, WHAT DID YOU SEE STARING BACK AT YOU?

I THOUGHT SO. YOU WERE ALWAYS HER FOOL, BOY. ALWAYS WILL BE. YOU THINK YOU HAVE GIVEN HER UP...

...BUT NO ONE WALKS AWAY FROM DEATH.

NOT EVEN YOU.

AND WHEN EXACTLY WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW YOUR GREAT LOVE?

OH, HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO? THOUSANDS? I DON'T RECALL TIME ANYMORE...

IT WAS...AFTER I KILLED THAT GOLD-SKINNED BOY... WHAT WAS HIS NAME? AARON SOMETHING?

...ADAM?

AH...YES, PERHAPS IT WAS.

SHE WAS... WAITING FOR ME AFTER THE BATTLE.

BUT, SHE... JUST STOOD THERE. NOT SAYING A WORD. AS IF SHE WERE WAITING FOR SOMETHING...

SOMETHING... MORE.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS... IT TOOK ME SO LONG TO SEE IT.

I GAVE HER EVERYTHING...

MY ENEMIES... MY ALLIES...MY CHILDREN...

EVERYTHING.

AND YET...

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

WHAAAM-
WHAAAM

BOOM

WHAAAM-
WHAAAM

WHAT IS THIS?!

I TOLD YOU, BOY, I DID NOT BRING YOU TO THE END OF THE WORLD FOR CONVERSATION.

IT IS TIME.

THE FALLEN ONE IS HERE.

WHAAAM-
WHAAAM

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

LOOK AT YOU! TREMBLING AT SOME LOST HERALD!

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

WHAT HAVE I BECOME?!

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

HOW FAR HAS THANOS FALLEN TO NEED ARMOR AND A BLADE TO FACE SUCH A PATHETIC FOE AS *THE FALLEN ONE*?!

OH...YES...I SUPPOSE YOU WOULDN'T KNOW, WOULD YOU...

BOY, YOU HAVE NEVER FACED THIS FOE. NOT LIKE THIS...

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

WHAAAM-WHAAAM

THE FALLEN ONE IS NOT A BEING, NOT A MAN...

...IT IS TITLE!

THANOS #16

"THANOS WINS" PART 4

WHEN HE WAS A YOUNGER MAN, AND NOT YET A COSMIC-FUELED ENGINE OF TIME-TRAVELING MURDER, **FRANK CASTLE'S** WIFE AND CHILDREN WERE SHOT TO DEATH BEFORE HIS EYES.

THIS EVENT LED HIM TO BECOME **THE PUNISHER**. A ONE-MAN WAR ON DOMESTIC TERROR IN EVERY FORM IT WOULD TAKE

BUT, AS STATED, THIS WAS A VERY LONG TIME AGO. AND, IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS, HARDLY WORTH MENTIONING.

THE STORY THAT MATTERS, THE ONE YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS, IS ONE NO MORTAL HAS EVER SEEN OR HEARD.

IT IS A STORY OF THREE DEVILS, AND THE ONE FOOL WHO MADE DEALS WITH THEM ALL.

AND TO BEGIN SUCH A DARK LEGEND, WE BEGIN WHERE ALL STORIES WILL SOMEDAY GO TO DIE...

WE BEGIN WITH THANOS.

FRANK CASTLE WAS ONE OF THE LAST MEN STANDING WHEN THANOS BATTLED THE EARTH'S HEROES FOR THE LAST TIME

AN EMPIRE'S FINAL BATTLE IS RARELY RECORDED IN ITS OWN HISTORY BOOKS. MUCH LESS IN THOSE KEPT BY ITS CONQUERORS.

TRUE TO THIS SENTIMENT, TO THIS VERY DAY, THERE ARE NO MENTIONS OF THIS LITTLE WAR IN THE RECORDS THAT KING THANOS KEEPS

PERHAPS THE OMISSION WAS BORN OF SPITE, AN UNWILLINGNESS TO RECORD THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO BEAT HIM TIME AND TIME AGAIN.

JUST AS LIKELY IS THE NOTION THAT THANOS SIMPLY **FORGOT**. HE **WAS** RATHER BUSY IN THOSE FINAL DAYS.

AFTER ALL, WHEN ONE IS MURDERING EVERY SENTIENT BEING IN THE COSMOS BY HAND... A LAPSE IN PERFECT RECORD-KEEPING CAN BE FORGIVEN.

BUT EVEN IF THERE SOMEHOW WERE SOME RECORD OF THIS EVENT, FRANK CASTLE WOULD NOT BE MENTIONED.

FOR ALL OF HIS BLUSTER AND MURDEROUS DRIVE, THE PUNISHER WOULD AMOUNT TO LITTLE MORE THAN A FOOTNOTE IN THE GRAND TAPESTRY OF THE MIGHTY HEROES OF EARTH.

IF IT WEREN'T, THAT IS, FOR HIS FINAL THOUGHT. FOR THE ONE HATEFUL PHRASE THAT SHOT THROUGH HIS BRAIN IN HIS FINAL MOMENTS.

AS HE LAY DYING, AND STARING UP AT THE MAD TITAN SLAUGHTERING HIS PLANET, FRANK CASTLE THOUGHT ONE THING...AND ONE THING ONLY..

"I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO PUNISH THAT PURPLE SONOFABITCH."

TO WHICH THE UNIVERSE REPLIED..

"ANYTHING"?

AND SO FRANK CASTLE, THE PUNISHER, SIGNED HIS FIRST DEMONIC DEAL... AND BECAME THE

GHOST RIDER
SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE.

BUT, AS LUCK (AND A CERTAIN MAD TITAN) WOULD HAVE IT...

...THERE WAS NOTHING MUCH LEFT IN ALL OF THE WORLD TO PUNISH OR AVENGE

AND AS DAYS TURNED TO YEARS, AND DECADES TURNED TO CENTURIES... AND AS THE UNRELENTING MARCH OF MILLENNIA DROVE ON AND ON...

...THE GHOST RIDER DID AS WELL.

ROAMING ENDLESSLY. ALONE AND UNDYING.

WITH NO ONE TO KILL.

AND NO ONE TO LOVE.

WHEN EVEN THE DEVIL FELL SILENT TO HIS CALLS, FRANK CASTLE RATHER...AGGRESSIVELY... BEGAN TO LOSE HIS MIND.

AND THAT IS WHEN THE DEVOURER ARRIVED

BUT GALACTUS DID NOT COME TO EARTH TO FEED OR DESTROY OR FIGHT NO, NOT THIS DAY.

BOOM

GALACTUS, YOU SEE, HAD BEEN HUNTED ACROSS THE STARS BY THANOS.

BARELY ESCAPING HIS ASSAULT, GALACTUS ARRIVED HUMBLED TO THE WORLD WHERE HE HAD SUFFERED HIS GREATEST DEFEATS

HE CAME FOR PROTECTION. FOR ASYLUM.

SOMEONE... P-PLEASE..

HE CAME FOR...

HELP!

BUT GALACTUS WAS TOO LATE. THE EARTH AND ITS CHAMPIONS HAD BEEN DEAD FOR EONS NOW.

RICHARDS! WHERE ARE YOU?! WH-WHERE ARE THEY? WH-WHAT HAS BEFALLEN..?

NO... NO, PLEASE. NO...

ALL BUT ONE...

HEY-O! DOWN HERE, KILLER!

HEY, MAN! 'S GALACTUS, RIGHT? HAHA, DAMN LONG TIME NO SEE, RIGHT?

OOF! SOMEONE REALLY BEAT THE @#$% OUTTA YOU, HUH? YEESH.

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU? WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

OH, YOU AIN'T HEARD? YEAH, THANOS KILLED EVERYONE, MAN. JUST CAME AND OBLITERATED ALL OF THE, UH...WELL, EVERYONE REALLY! HA!

NO...

YUUUP. I GOT KILLED, TOO. CAME BACK, THOUGH. I'M THE GHOST RIDER. SPIRIT A' BLAH BLAH WHATEVER.

I SEE AND YOU ARE THE...ONLY--

YEAH, SINCE THE WORLD ENDED I BEEN, UH...WELL, I AIN'T BEEN DOING MUCH, REALLY! I TELL YOU WHAT, THOUGH--I AIN'T MISSED A STEP! NOT ME. NOT OL' FRANK CASTLE. NO WAY.

FRANK...?

HEY! REAL QUICK QUESTION...

YOU... REAL?

LIKE, IS THIS REAL RIGHT NOW?

BECAUSE...I, UH...SOMETIMES I GET M-MAYBE CONFUSED, Y'KNOW?

:SIGH:

YES, LITTLE DEMON... GALACTUS IS REAL.

OH, OH OKAY, GOOD. SO, W-WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, GALACTUS?

DO?

YEAH, YOU [illegible] SCREAMING FOR HELP, RIGHT?

WHAT CAN I HELP YOU WITH?

GALACTUS TOLD THE GHOST RIDER ABOUT THANOS' BLOODY CAMPAIGN ACROSS THE STARS.

OF THE FALL OF ATTILAN AND THE DEATH OF THE INHUMANS. THE NEAR EXTERMINATION OF THE SHI'AR, THE KREE, THE SKRULLS.

OF THE RUMORS THAT THANOS PLANNED TO KILL EVEN THE COUNCIL OF WATCHERS AND THE GODS OF THE NORTH.

AND FINALLY OF HIS OWN BATTLE WITH THE DESTROYER.

AND HOW HE ONLY ESCAPED WITH THE HELP OF HIS NOW (HE BELIEVED) FALLEN HERALD, THE SILVER SURFER...

WELL, DAMN.

LOOKS LIKE WE BOTH WANT THAT @#$% HUH?

I TELL YOU WHAT. YOU MAKE ME YOUR HERALD AND HOOK ME UP WITH THEM CRAZY COSMIC POWERS AND ALL A' THAT...

...AND TOGETHER WE CAN GO AND PUNISH THAT PURPLE @#$% TOGETHER. HUH?

AND WHAT, PRAY TELL, IS IN THIS DEAL FOR GALACTUS?

OH, UH... WELL, HOW 'BOUT THIS-- AFTER I'M DONE WITH THANOS?

YOU CAN EAT EARTH! I-IF YOU STILL WANT TO.

IS THAT GOOD?

AND SO, FRANK CASTLE MADE HIS SECOND DEAL WITH THE DEVIL IN AS MANY LIFETIMES...TO BECOME

GHOST RIDER

HERALD OF GALACTUS!

TOGETHER THEY ROARED ACROSS THE COSMOS ON A QUEST TO HALT THANOS' SYSTEMATIC ANNIHILATION OF EVERY SENTIENT BEING IN EXISTENCE.

THEIR INCREDIBLE STORY LASTED CENTURIES.

THE HERCULEAN DEEDS THEY ACCOMPLISHED, AND THE FOES THEY VANQUISHED IN THEIR SEARCH FOR THE **MAD TITAN KING, BECAME LEGEND.**

THE ROAR OF THE RIDER'S ENGINES (AUDIBLE EVEN IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE) BECAME A BEACON OF HOPE TO THOSE STILL ALIVE TO HEAR THEM.

A FAINT, DISTANT PROMISE THAT... PERHAPS NOT ALL WAS LOST IN THE STARS.

THAT EVEN IN THESE DARKEST OF DAYS...THE HEART OF A HERO STILL BEAT INSIDE OF THE CHEST OF A DEAD MAN

BUT THEN, OF COURSE...

VWAAMMM

RAAGGHH!

I HAVE HEARD TELL OF YOU, RIDER. YOU DEFY DEATH. THANOS IS...

DEATH

...INTRIGUED.

YOU THINK I'M THE WORST THING OUT HERE, BOY? I HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN!

I CANNOT KILL YOU. YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME.

BUT YOU COME WITH ME, RIDER. AND AT MY SIDE, I WILL SHOW YOU MORE EVIL THAN YOU CAN PUNISH IN A THOUSAND LIFETIMES...

WITH THAT, FRANK CASTLE MADE HIS THIRD AND FINAL DEAL WITH THE DEVIL.

AND IN SO DOING, BECAME

THE RIDER

BLACK RIGHT HAND OF THE MAD KING THANOS.

AND THROUGH ALL OF THIS, THIS ENDLESS DEATH AND REBIRTH AT THE HANDS OF DEMONS AND GODS...

...THE COUNTLESS INFINITIES HE HAS EXPERIENCED, THE INCREDIBLE SIGHTS HIS LONG-DEAD EYES HAVE SEEN...

AFTER ALL OF THESE THINGS...

...IF YOU WERE TO TELL FRANK CASTLE WHERE HE WOULD BE STANDING WHEN THE UNIVERSE CAME TO ITS EVENTUAL AND INEVITABLE END...

...HE WOULDN'T BELIEVE YOU IN A MILLION YEARS.

THE ANNIHILUS HORDE? REALLY, NORRIN, IS THIS ALL THAT YOU HAVE BROUGHT FOR ME? AFTER ALL THIS TIME?

AGH!

HAHA!

RATATATATATATATATATA

RIDER! SOMETHING HELLISH, IF YOU ARE DONE PLAYING WITH YOUR FIREARMS!

HA! YOU KNOW I ALWAYS FORGET I CAN DO THAT STUFF!

AGGHHHH!

KA-THOOM

HA!

WELL, BOY, YOU MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT. PERHAPS IT WAS A WASTE TO BRING YOU ALL THE WAY HERE AFTER ALL. THE RIDER COULD HAVE HANDLED THIS HIMSELF!

HEY, THANKS. I COULDNA DONE IT WITHOUT YO—

SILENCE. THIS...THIS IS NOT RIGHT...

CAN IT HAVE BEEN THIS EASY?

NO

WHAMMM

BOOM

AGH!

I DON'T CARE HOW MANY OF YOU THERE ARE...

...THIS ENDS TODAY, THANOS. IT'S LONG PAST TIME YOU ANSWERED FOR THE LIVES YOU HAVE STOLEN.

HA! IF YOU COULD KILL ME, YOU WOULD HAVE DONE IT BY NOW! TELL ME, NORRIN...

IF YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY JUST TO DIE...

WHY DID YOU WAIT SO DAMN LONG?!

I WAS NOT WAITING...

BOOM

...I WAS WORKING.

BOOM

HA! IS THAT SO?!

ON WHAT?!

RMMMBBBLLL

ON BECOMING WORTHY.

KRA-KOOM!

THANOS #17

"THANOS WINS" PART 5

THE TALE OF THE MAN ONCE KNOWN AS NORRIN RADD IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD.

IT BEGINS AS A TALE OF HONOR AND LOVE. OF A DOOMED PLANET A RAVENOUS GOD A NOBLE SACRIFICE...

YOU KNOW THIS STORY, AND UNDOUBTEDLY YOU KNOW THE LEGENDS THAT COME AFTER HIS ASCENSION.

HIS TIME AS A HERALD. HIS TREASON AGAINST THE DEVOURER. HIS TIME AS A HERO. AS A DEFENDER.

BUT YOU DO NOT KNOW THIS STORY.

YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD OF THE SURFER'S FALL FROM THE HEAVENS. HIS BATTLES WITH GODS.

YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD THE TALE OF HIS REDEMPTION INSIDE THE SHATTERED GATES OF ASGARD.

AND YOU NEVER WILL.

BECAUSE ONCE HIS WAR WITH THE TWIN TITANS IS OVER...

...THERE WILL BE NO ONE LEFT ALIVE TO TELL IT.

I'M GOING TO KILL YOU WITH THAT HAMMER, NORRIN.

I SEE TIME HAS NOT QUELLED THAT DELUSIONAL EGO OF YOURS, THANOS.

YOU WILL NEVER BE WORTHY OF THIS HAMMER. NOT IF YOU LIVED A MILLION YEARS MORE...

BUT WORRY NOT, TITAN. IF YOU WISH TO BE WITH MJOLNIR...

...I WILL LEAVE IT TO MARK YOUR GRAVE.

AH, @#$%.

KRAKA—

AGH!

AGHHHH!

TOOL

BOOM

GAH!

VWWAAM

NO!

AGGGGHHH!

!OOOOOMM

CRSH

HEY, CHROME DOME! I THINK YOU FORGOT SOMETHING...

...YOU AIN'T THE ONLY HERALD IN THE HOUSE.

RATATATAT

I DID NOT FORGET...

...I JUST DON'T CARE.

YOU HAVEN'T WON ANYTHING, SURFER.

YOU'VE JUST UNLEASHED SOMETHING YOU CANNOT HOPE TO CONTAIN.

I HAVE BEEN BEATING BACK THE FURY OF THANOS FOR EONS, CHILD. I ASSURE YOU, I AM MORE THAN READY TO FACE THE--

HEH, YOU FOOL.

I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE OLD MAN.

IS THAT SO? THEN TELL ME, WHAT IS IT THAT I HAVE...

RUMMMBLLE

_UNLEASHED?

RMMMMMMBBLLLE

HULK KILL!

KRAK

BOOM

BRUCE?

HULK KILL!

BRUCE, LISTEN TO ME!

RAGHHH!

ENOUGH!

BUT PLEASE_PLEASE TRY TO CALM DOWN. YOU'LL ONLY HURT YOURSELF.

YOU CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE THE FIRST TIME, OLD FRIEND.

HULK KILL!

NO... NO...THIS ISN'T YOU.

...LISTEN TO MY VOICE, BRUCE. FOLLOW ME HOME.

HULK... KILL...

KILL...

KILL...

KILL ME.

PLEASE KILL ME.

OH, BRUCE, WHAT HAS THAT MONSTER DONE TO YOU?

D-DON'T LET ME HURT ANYONE... PLEASE...

IT'S OKAY, MY FRIEND. REST.

THIS WILL ALL BE OVER SOON.

LET'S HURRY THIS UP, SHALL WE? I GROW TIRED OF THIS DANCING.

I AM NOT HID.NG, THANOS.

COME THEN. LET US--

ONCE AGAIN, SURFER...

...NO ONE IS TALKING TO YOU.

THERE, AT THE END OF TIME, THE LAST SPARK OF HOPE DIED IN SILENCE ON A RUINED EARTH.

THE FIGHT, IF IT CAN BE CALLED THAT, WAS BRUTAL.

ONE-SIDED. CRUEL.

THE FALLEN ONE NEVER BEGGED OR CRIED.

THE DESTROYERS WENT ABOUT THEIR WORK WITHOUT SPEAKING A WORD NOT TO THE SURFER. AND NOT TO EACH OTHER.

THEIR MOVEMENTS SO PRECISE AND EXACT, AS IF CHOREOGRAPHED OVER CENTURIES.

FOUR HANDS ON THE SAME BLADE.

TWO BLACK HEARTS SLOWLY BEATING THE SAME METER.

ONE COULD ALMOST BE FORGIVEN FOR FINDING THE BEAUTY IN IT ALL.

RAGGHH!

OF COURSE, NO ONE WAS LEFT ALIVE IN ALL OF EXISTENCE TO WITNESS THE LAST MAD BATTLE OF KING THANOS.

WELL, EXCEPT FOR ONE. BUT SHE WOULD NOT BE STIRRED UNTIL THE TIME WAS RIGHT.

SHE WOULD ARRIVE NEITHER EARLY NOR LATE.

BUT SHE DID WATCH.

AND, AT TIMES... IF IT CAN BE BELIEVED...

WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT THAT HAMMER?

...SHE LAUGHED.

AND THEN IT WAS DONE.

THE LAST TITANS STOOD OVER THE BODY OF A SHATTERED ANGEL IN A CHURCH BUILT FOR THEIR GREATEST LOVE.

FOR ONE OF THEM, IT WAS THE END OF AN UNWANTED JOURNEY...

THERE. YOUR GREAT FOE IS DEAD. NOW SEND ME HOME

FOR THE OTHER...IT WAS THE SWEETEST DAY OF HIS NEVER-ENDING LIFE.

DO YOU HEAR ME OLD MAN? YOU WILL--

SHUT UP AND LOOK, BOY...

BECAUSE WITH THE DEATH OF THE FALLEN ONE, KING THANOS HAD GIVEN HIS MISTRESS EVERYTHING HE COULD POSSIBLY GIVE HER.

AND LO, ON A BLACKENED EARTH AT THE END OF EVERYTHING...

...THERE WAS DEATH...

...DRESSED FOR A WEDDING.

THANOS #18

"THANOS WINS" PART 6

THESE ARE THE FINAL DAYS OF THANOS.

YOU HAVE WITNESSED, IN THE TELLING OF THIS TALE, EVERY SINGLE MOMENT OF CONSEQUENCE IN THE MAD TITAN'S LIFE.

YOU HAVE SEEN THE CRUEL BIRTH, AND THE MERCIFUL DEATH, OF HIS FOOLISHLY BRAVE BLACK RIGHT HAND.

YOU HAVE SEEN HIS ASCENSION TO GODHOOD. HIS FINAL FOE BROUGHT LOW BY TWO PAIRS OF HIS OWN HANDS.

YOU HAVE SEEN ALL OF THIS, AND YOU HAVE SEEN THE EMPTINESS THAT IT HAS BROUGHT HIM

BUT HERE, AT THE END OF EVERYTHING...

...IS SOMETHING YOU WILL NEVER SEE AGAIN.

A THANOS... AT PEACE.

MY LADY. YOU CAME...

INDEED SHE HAS...

BUT WHY HAS SHE STOPPED?

WHY DOES SHE NOT COME FURTHER?

WHAT MORE DOES SHE WANT?!

BOY! CAREFUL WHAT YOU--

NO!

THIS IS ENOUGH! NO MORE!

I GROW TIRED OF YOUR GAMES! I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW TIRED HE IS OF THEM.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!

WHY WILL YOU NOT RELENT?! SPEAK TO ME!

I HAVE-- WE HAVE GIVEN YOU EVERYTHING THAT YOU WANTED! THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO KILL!

WHAT MORE COULD YOU...

OH...

I HAVE TO KILL YOU.

THAT'S WHY YOU BROUGHT ME HERE.

IT WAS NEVER TO KILL THE SURFER, WAS IT?

YOU'VE GIVEN HER EVERYTHING ELSE IN CREATION, BUT THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT?

WE HAVE TO DIE TO BE WITH HER.

LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE.

YES.

AND IF THANOS MUST DIE?

NO ONE KILLS THANOS BUT THANOS.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'LL MAKE IT EASY.

WOULD YOU?

RIGHT. LET'S END THIS, THEN. I AM ANXIOUS TO BE DONE DOING YOUR CHORES FOR YOU.

BEFORE WE DO, I WANTED TO SAY...

...THE RIDER WAS MY COMPANION...BUT HE WAS SIMPLE. MEEK. .

THOUGH YOU ARE...ABRASIVE, IT HAS BEEN...NICE TO FEEL THAT ANGER ONCE AGAIN.

...THAT BOTTOMLESS PIT OF DESIRE, HATE, AND DRIVE THAT HAS BEEN DAMPENED IN ME OVER TIME.

IT HAS BEEN...GOOD TO NOT BE ALONE IN THESE FINAL DAYS.

IF I MAY GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE TO CARRY WITH YOU IN YOUR JOURNEY FROM THIS DAY TO THIS DAY.

IN MY TIME, I HAVE SEEN SUCH WONDROUS THINGS, THANOS. THINGS THAT, IN A WAY...

...I ENVY YOUR YOUNG EYES TO SEE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

I HAVE MADE MANY MISTAKES. BUT IF I HAVE LEARNED ONE THING IN MY TIME, IT IS TO NEVER--

AGHI

WWWAK

DO YOU WANT TO TALK OR DO YOU WANT TO DIE?

HEH... VERY WELL, THEN.

AND, OF COURSE, THIS IS HOW IT ENDS.

THE LAST OF THE TITANS FIGHTING FOR THE HAND OF DEATH AT THE DUSK OF TIME.

IT WAS NOT COLD, THE WAY THEIR BATTLE WITH THE FALLEN ONE WAS. NOT CLINICAL.

NO, THERE WAS SOMETHING MORE TO THIS FIGHT...

EACH THANOS TAKING A COMBINED ETERNITY OF PAIN AND SORROW OUT ON THEMSELVES. DEALING NOT IN WORDS OR FEELINGS, BUT IN THEIR SHARED LANGUAGE OF BLOOD.

EACH BLOW A PUNISHMENT FOR SOME HIDDEN REGRET THEY CARRIED INSIDE OF THEM.

FOR GIVING UP. FOR GIVING IN.

JEALOUSY OF STRENGTH. HATRED FOR WEAKNESS.

AND RAGE. RAGE FOR THE SADNESS AND DESPAIR THAT THEY WILL NEVER SPEAK.

RAGE THAT THEY BALL UP INSIDE THEIR FISTS AND THROW INTO ONE ANOTHER INSTEAD OF DARING TO SPEAK IT ALOUD.

EACH OF THEM ROARING AGAINST THE DAWNING CERTAINTY THAT WHAT THEY HATE THE MOST IN EACH OTHER...IS THAT THEY ARE EACH OTHER

IT IS PERHAPS FITTING, ONE CONSIDERS, THAT THANOS CAN ONLY TRULY EXPRESS HIMSELF...

...WHILE KILLING HIMSELF.

GRAGGHH!

HRH

BOOM BOOM BOOOOMM

BOOOM

HUH!

HAGH!

AGHHH!

SINCE HE FIRST LAID EYES ON HIS FUTURE SELF, THANOS HAS THOUGHT OF LITTLE ELSE BUT THIS VERY MOMENT.

THIS WEAK, PATHETIC, OLD MAN, BEATEN AND SUPPLICANT BEFORE HIM

WHAT *COUGH* WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!

THE LOOK OF FEAR IN HIS EYES AS HE SEES THE ERROR IN BRINGING HIMSELF TO HIS WORLD.

FINISH THIS!

AND THE REALIZATION THAT HIS WOULD BE THE LAST FACE HE EVER SEES.

AND YET...

KILL ME!

...IF YOU WERE TO ASK THANOS TO TELL YOU HOW HE BELIEVES THE UNIVERSE WILL COME TO ITS INEVITABLE END...

KRAK

...HE WOULD TELL YOU THAT HE HONESTLY DOESN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT IT AT ALL.

BECAUSE THANOS KNOWS THAT WHATEVER IT IS, NO MATTER HOW EVERYTHING ENDS...

DO IT. END THIS.

...HE WILL BE THERE FOR IT.

THANOS, PLEASE!

AND WHEN IT COMES...

...HE WILL FACE IT ON HIS FEET

WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

THANOS, COME BACK AND FINISH THIS!

PLEASE!

KINGS DO NOT BEG

YOU...

YOU COWARD! YOU WEAKLING!

YOU'RE AFRAID! JUST A SCARED LITTLE BOY!

COME ON! COME ON, THEN!

COME AND FINISH WHAT YOU STAR--

BOOM

ENOUGH! YOU WILL NOT GOAD ME INTO DOING YOUR WORK FOR YOU, OLD MAN.

YOU WANT TO DIE?

DO IT YOURSELF.

SNAP

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THAT GEM IS BROKEN, YOU FOOL! IT WILL NOT--

YOUR GHOST RIDER WAS ABLE TO CHARGE THE STONE, YES?

MMM. IF ONLY THERE WERE A HERALD HERE NOW...

THANOS... DO NOT DO THIS!

DO NOT LEAVE ME CRIPPLED AND BROKEN AND ALIVE!

YOU ARE ONLY DOOMING YOURSELF!

THIS IS *YOUR* FATE YOU ARE SEALING, BOY! THIS IS *YOUR END!*

WWAAAA

WE CANNOT DIE...

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?!

OH, YES.

BWAAHHH

IT MEANS THAT I HAVE ALL THE TIME I NEED.

I WILL NOT KILL YOU, OLD MAN.

BUT UNTIL I AM ASH AND BONE I WILL WORK WITHOUT END TO DENY YOU.

I WILL *NEVER* BECOME YOU.

I WILL *ERASE* YOU.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

BWAAHHH

BWAAHHH

BOOM

A MOMENT PASSES...

AND ALL IS AS IT EVER WAS...

AND THEN, LAUGHTER.

HA! HAHAHA!

FOLLOWED BY A COLD WIND.

DON'T YOU SEE, MY LOVE! WE ARE STILL HERE!

THE BOY... HE DID NOTHING! I AM MEANT TO BE...

WE ARE MEANT TO BE...

AND WITH IT, THE END OF EVERYTHING.

...TOGETHER.

BECAUSE, YOU SEE...THE ANSWER TO OUR LITTLE RIDDLE IS SIMPLE.

MY LADY? WHY DO YOU LOOK SO...

"HOW WILL THIS MARVELOUS UNIVERSE OF OURS ARRIVE AT ITS BLOODY AND INEVITABLE END?"

OH... YOU... YOU AREN'T DRESSED FOR A WEDDING.

...ARE YOU?

HE'S DONE IT. HE'S ERASED ME.

MY LOVE...BEFORE I AM LOST, TELL ME. WHAT DID HE DO TO BE RID OF ME?

WHAT DID THANOS DO?

HE WON

WHY, IT WILL END THE SAME WAY EVERY STORY THAT HAS EVER BEEN TOLD HAS ENDED...

WITH DEATH

DEATH...

_AND NOTHING MORE

THE END.

THANOS ANNUAL #1

"TITAN'S GREATEST DAD" • "WHAT TO GET FROM THE MAN WHO TAKES EVERYTHING" • "EXHIBITION" • "MY LITTLE THANOS" • "THAT TIME THANOS HELPED AN OLD LADY CROSS THE STREET!" • "THE COMFORT OF THE GOOD"

HEY THERE. NAME'S FRANK. MOST FOLKS CALL ME THE RIDER THESE DAYS.

WELL, THESE DAYS I'M DEAD, BUT YOU GET IT.

I MEAN, I'VE DIED A WHOLE BUNCH, BUT THIS LAST TIME STUCK, I GUESS. GOT SMASHED TO BITS BY SILVER SURFER CARTIN' AROUND THOR'S HAMMER. EXCITING STUFF.

SO NOW I'M HERE. AT REST. AT PEACE.

ONLY...I AIN'T FEELIN' TOO PEACEFUL. I CAN STILL...FEEL HIM. CAN STILL SEE ALL THE HORRIBLE THINGS HE DID CRAWLIN' OVER ME LIKE BUGS IN MY SKIN.

THANOS, I MEAN.

SEE, HE USED TO MAKE ME GIVE HIM THE OL' PENANCE STARE EVERY SINGLE MORNING. USED TO LOVE BATHIN' IN ALL THE CRUMMY THINGS HE'D DONE.

HEH... ACTUALLY, THAT REMINDS ME OF A JOKE I USED TO TELL TO...

WELL, I ONLY EVER TOLD IT TO MYSELF AND SOME LIZARDS, BUT, YEAH. GOES LIKE THIS:

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FAIRY TALE AND A THANOS STORY?

A FAIRY TALE BEGINS WITH "ONCE UPON A TIME..."

BUT THANOS STORIES...WELL, THEY BEGIN WITH "MAN...

"...YOU AIN'T NEVER GONNA BELIEVE THIS @#%&!"

THIS ONE IS PRETTY ROUGH.

IT TAKES PLACE A LONG, LONG TIME AGO...

SEE, THANOS USED TO HOLD THESE LITTLE MAKESHIFT FIGHTING TOURNAMENTS ON HIS SHIP, THE SANCTUARY II.

AND NO, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO SANCTUARY I. SO ASK HIM.

THEY WERE MORE OR LESS BLOOD SPORT DISGUISED AS TRAINING EXERCISES...

...A MURDER PIT FOR A CLASSROOM...

...FOR HIS DAUGHTER. GAMORA.

MAY I BE DONE YET, "FATHER"?

NO.

ANOTHER.

THANOS, BEING THE GIFTED DISCIPLINARIAN THAT HE IS, WOULD OCCASIONALLY RAZE AN ENTIRE CIVILIZATION SO HE COULD TAKE A SINGLE PRISONER...

...JUST TO BRING SOMETHING HOME FOR GAMORA TO "PLAY" WITH.

IF YOU'RE JUST JOINING US, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT THANOS WAS, BY ALL ACCOUNTS, A PRETTY TERRIBLE FATHER.

BUT HEY, I GUESS YOU CAN'T ARGUE WITH RESULTS, RIGHT?

KRAK

AGH!

GAMORA WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME THE DEADLIEST WOMAN IN THE GALAXY.

AND YOU DON'T EARN THAT TITLE WITH CLEAN HANDS.

OR A WEAK STOMACH.

THANOS... PLEASE...PLEASE STOP THIS! MERCY!

CRUEL THOUGH HE MAY VERY WELL HAVE BEEN...

YOU ARE NOT HERE FOR MERCY.

FINISH IT.

...THANOS TAUGHT HIS DAUGHTER TO FACE DEATH THAT DAY.

TO EMBRACE HER END.

TO LOOK DEATH IN THE EYE.

AND TO MEET HER GAZE, UNBLINKING AND UNAFRAID.

MAY I BE DONE NOW, "FATHER"?

NO.

ANOTHER.

PRETTY @#$%&* UP, YEAH?

WELL, HOLD ON THERE, KIDDIES. I'M JUST GETTIN' STARTED...

HEH HEH... NOW I KNOW YOU THINK THE GREAT THANOS IS A DESTROYER OF WORLDS, OF WHOLE POPULATIONS! HIS THIRST FOR PAIN CANNOT BE CONTAINED BY THE BORDERS OF REALITY...

...BUT NO CRUELTY IS TOO SMALL FOR THE TERRIBLE KING EITHER, AND MAY EVEN OFFER GREATER PLEASURE.

SEE DAVID, 1 YEAR OLD...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DAVID. WE LOVE YOU.

THE FIRST OF MANY VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAYS, LITTLE DAVID.

WWAAAAAA!

WHAT IS IT, HONEY?

WHERE'D HIS BLANKET GO? HE LITERALLY HAD IT JUST FIVE MINUTES AGO.

I DON'T KNOW!

5 YEARS OLD.

CAN I STOP HAVING BIRTHDAYS, MAMA? THE MONSTER DOESN'T COME IF IT'S NOT MY BIRTHDAY.

DAVID, THERE IS NO MONSTER. YOUR FATHER IS GOING TO BE HERE WITH CAKE, AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND--

CRUNCH

WHAT WAS THAT?

WHUH--WHUH-- NOOOO!

THE MONSTER! THE MONSTER DID IT! AAAAAH!

16 YEARS OLD.

HNGH?

Happy birthday, baby! I can't wait to see you today! xOxOxo

AH!

I STILL SURPRISE YOU, DAVID?

YOU GOT A GIRLFRIEND...

PLEASE, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? NOBODY BELIEVES ME--

QUIET.

TEK TEK

DING!

YOU HAVE NO WAY OF WALKING THAT COMMENT BACK. WHAT A CRUEL BOYFRIEND YOU ARE.

I DIDN'T--

What the &$@%, you #&@$%#!!! WE'RE OVER. I hope you DIE.

PLEASE, WHY--

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

21 YEARS OLD.

DON'T DRINK THAT. HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

25 YEARS OLD.

WAS THIS THE GRAD SCHOOL YOU GOT INTO? HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

27 YEARS OLD.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DAVID.

YOU GOT ME FIRED?

NO. BAD LUCK.

THEN--?

YOUR CAT IS DEAD.

30 YEARS OLD.

...HE HAS TO TELL ME. HE HAS TO TELL ME *WHY*. HE WON'T STOP. I KNOW THAT. BUT IF I CAN JUST GET HIM TO SAY *WHY*--

IT'S AFTER MIDNIGHT.

HE...

...HE *MISSED* IT?

BUT...

...THANOS DEFEATED AND EXILED BY EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.

HE MISSED MY BIRTHDAY

31 YEARS OLD.

...YOU SAY IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY! DUNNA NUNNA NAH NAH NA NAH!

WELL, IT'S--

WELL, IT'S MY BIRTHDAY TOO, YEAH!

NO.

NO. YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S NOT.

I'M SO SORRY I MISSED YOU LAST YEAR, DAVID. I PROMISE IT WILL *NEVER* HAPPEN AGAIN.

WHY, WHY? *PLEASE*, WHY DO YOU *DO* THIS?

I LOVE THESE MEETINGS. THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT TO ME, DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT? LET ME MAKE UP FOR MISSING LAST YEAR

SNAP

THOOM

HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

45 YEARS OLD.

DAVID. HAPPY BIRTHDAY... UGH.

NOT A LOT TO WORK WITH ANYMORE, IS THERE?

THANOS.

YOU'VE TORMENTED ME FOR EVERY YEAR OF MY LIFE, AND FOR A LONG TIME, ALL I WANTED TO KNOW WAS *WHY.*

MHM.

BUT LATELY, I'VE STARTED TO THINK, WHY DO *YOU* THINK I'LL KEEP STICKING AROUND FOR ALL OF THIS?

WHY DON'T I JUST *KILL* MYSELF? RIGHT? THAT'S *WHY.* YOU WANT TO SEE HOW FAR YOU CAN *PUSH* A PERSON. I KNOW WHAT YOU DO THE REST OF THE YEAR. YOU CONQUER *PLANETS* AND YOU *KILL* SUPER HEROES!

BUT EVERY YEAR YOU COME BACK TO *ME.*

SO I'M GOING TO *TELL* YOU WHY I *HANG ON.* WHY I *KEEP LIVING,* DESPITE *EVERYTHING* YOU'VE *DONE* TO ME, TO THE *PEOPLE* I *LOVE.*

I WAKE UP EVERY DAY AND

AAH

NO, DAVID. I DON'T CARE.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR.

FOR A NIHILIST, THANOS CAN BE PLENTY ROMANTIC. EVERYTHING HE DID WITH THE INFINITY GAUNTLET?

IT'S HIS EQUIVALENT OF TURNING UP OUTSIDE DEATH'S HOUSE WITH A BOOMBOX PLAYING HER FAVORITE SONGS...

...AND HE'S CERTAINLY GOT AN EYE FOR ART...

WHAT MORE CAN I DO?!

I BURN FOR YOU! I SET THE UNIVERSE ABLAZE TO WARM YOUR FREEZING HEART!

HALF OF ALL THAT LIVES IS DEAD, AND STILL NOTHING! YOUR LOVE IS HELL!

LORD THANOS! DEATH IS A *WOMAN!* YOU MUST *WOO* HER! *THEN* THE SUN OF LOVE WILL DAWN UPON THOSE FRIGID LANDS!

YOU HAVE SHOWN HER *POWER!* NOW REVEAL YOU ARE MORE THAN A *BLUDGEON!* BRING HER *POETRY!* BRING HER *ART!*

HMM. PERHAPS.

I WILL SHOW FAIR DEATH ART AS ONLY THANOS CAN...

ON THE FORESTED WORLD OF ARBENTH, THE ARBOREAL-POET TREES ARE ENGRAVED WITH BEAUTIFUL WORDS, PHRASES, PARAGRAPHS.

COME AUTUMN, THE LEAVES FALL, AND EDITOR-GARDENERS SIFT THROUGH THE DRIFTS OF NARRATIVE, COLLATING THE YEAR'S NEW STORIES.

LOVERS RETURN TO THE GROVES WHERE, IN SPRING, THEY LOVED, TO SEE HOW THE TREES IMMORTALIZED THEIR PASSIONS IN VERSE

BOUND INTO FOLIOS, THEY ARE EXPORTED WHERE THEY ARE CHERISH--

THE ROCKY WORLD OF CARBANIRE GAINS ADVENTUROUS PILGRIMS. UPON ARRIVAL THEY ARE BLINDFOLDED, THEIR FINGERS GUIDED TO THE EMBOSSED WRITING ON THE SURFACE OF EVERY PATH.

THEY FOLLOW THE STORY, AND EACH BRANCH OFFERS A CHOICE. THEIR DECISIONS DETERMINE THE ROUTE OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL PILGRIMAGE ACROSS THE ENTIRE WORLD.

SO MANY WAYS, IT'S SAID THAT NO PILGRIM HAS EVER RETROD THE EXACT STOR--

ON THE GARGANTUAN WORLD OF LOBA, TRIBES LIVE AT EITHER END OF THE THOUSAND-MILE ACOUSTIC CANYONS. IT TAKES A HALF-YEAR FOR THE SONGS OF ONE TO REACH THE OTHER.

CHOIRS THE SIZE OF CITIES SERENADE ONE ANOTHER ACROSS SEASONS. PEACE AND JOY IS--

ACROSS MILLIONS OF YEARS, INIX WAS HAND-CARVED TO BE A SCULPTURE PLEASING TO ALL EYES, BEST VIEWED FROM ORBIT, WHERE--

SHEEKA @LIFF, THE SILVERED LAND, A CLOCKWORK PARADISE WHERE FILIGREE BIRDS SIP FROM PLATINUM BLOOMS AND--

ARCO PRIME, THE THEATER BIOME, WHERE EVERY CELL IS A STAGE, AND NANO-ACTORS PERFORM BENEATH EXPECTANT MICROSCOPES. THE--

SEE, MY LOVE?

ALL THAT ART.

IT FUELS MY GREATER WORK.

IT SHOWS WHAT ALL THIS ART TRULY IS_

...NAUGHT BUT A MOMENTARY, MEANINGLESS DISTRACTION.

SAY WHAT YOU LIKE, BUT HE'S GOT THE SOUL OF AN ARTIST.

SADLY, THE ARTIST'S THE MARQUIS DE SADE.

OH, YEAH, THIS ONE'S *REALLY* MESSED UP.

THE RANK AND FILE OF THE UNIVERSE WILL ALL KNOW THE NAME OF *THANOS* AND QUAKE IN FEAR OF MY COMING.

WHAT'S THIS? IT SHINES WITH... SO MUCH LIGHT?

IT SHINES WITH, WHAT, POWER? IT MAY BE WORTH INVESTIGATING.

WHAT ARE THESE...THESE PALTRY LITTLE THINGS?

WE ARE THE *ADORALES!!!*

LOVE

PUNY CREATURES. I AM THANOS. I AM A GOD AMONGST YOU.

POKE

OH, BOY! A NEW GOD! YEAH!

THAT'S EXCITING!

OOOOH. I LIKE NEW THINGS.

WHAT THE...

UH... RIGHT.
NOW... PRAY TO WHATEVER YOU WORSHIP THAT I MAY TAKE PITY ON—
OH! WE WORSHIP THE HEART!
WAIT, THE HEART? AS IN... THE HEART OF... THE UNIVERSE? HERE?
WELL, IT'S THE HEART OF OUR UNIVERSE!
BRING ME THIS HEART IMMEDIATELY. IT MUST BE WHAT MAKES YOUR WORLD SHINE SO BRIGHT.
I'LL GO GET IT!
I THINK WE SHINE WITH LOVE.
AW, I THINK WE SHINE WITH WARM FUZZIES.
HOW DARE YOU TOUCH ME, YOU INFERIOR... THINGS. I'LL STRIKE YOU ALL DEAD IN A HEARTBEAT.
shake off
OH! OH! MR. NEW GOD! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT? US DEAD? WE CAN HELP!
HELPING IS FUN!
WHAT THE...
OH, ADORALES! OUR NEW GOD WANTS TO MURDER US! WHO'S FIRST?
OOH. ME! ME! I HAVE SO MUCH TO LIVE FOR! IT'LL MAKE MY DEATH MORE IMPACTFUL!
GOOD FOR YOU, DADDY!

WOULD YOU LIKE EVERYONE IMPALED, NEW GOD?

OH, PEPPERMINT!

I WILL GLADLY RIP MY OWN SQUISHY WORKS OUT FOR YOU, NEW GOD!

RIIIP

"CHOKE"

GASP.

NEW GOD, THIS IS MY BROTHER!

...YOU KNOW, THIS ISN'T REALLY AS FUN WHEN I'M NOT THE ONE DOING IT.

IT LOOKS LIKE I MISSED SOMETHING FUN! NEAT!

FINALLY. GIVE ME THE HEART SO I CAN LEAVE THIS HORRIBLE PLACE.

THAT'S... WHAT YOU WORSHIP.

IT GETS BETTER!

twitch

SQUEEE

I ALREADY TOLD YOU ABOUT HOW HE'S IN LOVE WITH DEATH, AND HOW FROM TIME TO TIME HE'S USED THE *INFINITY GAUNTLET* TO KILL HALF OF ALL LIFE EVERYWHERE.

HAPPENS TO THE BEST OF US.

BUT WHAT I DIDN'T TELL YOU WAS THAT NESTLED AMONG THE GEMS CONTAINED WITHIN THE GAUNTLET, THERE'S THIS ONE GEM IN PARTICULAR: THE *TIME GEM*.

GREAT LITTLE THING.

LETS YOU SEE THROUGH TIME. REAL HANDY.

AND WITH IT, THANOS SAW SOMETHING...

...POTENTIAL.

NOT SOMETHING HE COULD USE RIGHT NOW, BUT SOMETHING HE WOULD WAIT FOR. SOMETHING TO SAVOR...

MY WORD, THESE CROSSWALKS SIMPLY DON'T GIVE YOU ENOUGH TIME TO GET ACROSS!

...UNTIL THE MOMENT WAS RIPE.

EXCUSE ME, MA'AM, BUT I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING.

...MAY I BE SO BOLD AS TO OFFER MY ASSISTANCE?

PENNY'S DINER

PRESENTING: A STORY NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART! A TALE SO HORRIFYING, SO FRIGHTENING, SO PETRIFYING WITH TERROR, THAT IT COULD ONLY BE CALLED...

THAT TIME THANOS HELPED AN OLD LADY CROSS THE STREET!

PENNY

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, YOUNG MAN.

IT IS MY SINCEREST PLEASURE, MY DEAR.

SCREEEECH

HEY, BUTTWIPE! WHAT'S THE BIG--

...IDEA...

UM, JUST IGNORE ME I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE FROM ANY MAD TITANS, I'M JUST TRYING TO DO MY JOB HERE YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.

HAH HAH PLEASE SPARE ME

...WHOA.

THERE WE GO. TAKE YOUR TIME. THERE'S NO NEED TO RUSH.

AND THAT WAS IT.

YOU'RE VERY KIND. WOULD YOU LIKE A MINT?

EVERYTHING HAD GONE EXACTLY AS HE'D PLANNED.

THANOS HAD SUCCESSFULLY PERFORMED THE MOST CALLOUSLY EVIL ACT IN HIS LIFE...

YOU HOLD ON TO THOSE--I'M SURE YOUR HUSBAND WOULD WANT THEM MORE THAN I DO.

OH, GOODNESS ME NO, I NEVER MARRIED.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT. A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN LIKE YOURSELF?

OH, YOU FLIRT!

...AND HE DID IT RIGHT UNDER THE NOSE OF EVERY SUPER HERO PROTECTING EARTH.

HELL, HE HADN'T EVEN BROKEN ANY LAW.

THAT WOMAN ON THE BUS IS STEPHANIE KIRCHER. FUN FACT: SHE'S DESTINED TO CHANGE THE WORLD. SHE'LL CURE DISEASE. END HUNGER. STOP INEQUALITY. SHE'S GOING TO TURN EARTH INTO A PARADISE, AND FROM THERE, THE UNIVERSE.

AND IT ALL BEGINS TODAY, RIGHT NOW, WHEN SHE STEPS OFF THAT BUS...

...AND BUMPS INTO SUZANNE.

BUT OF COURSE, STEPHANIE NEVER BUMPED INTO SUZANNE. THANOS HAD DELAYED THE BUS.

STEPHANIE KIRCHER NEVER BUMPED INTO *ANYONE.*

INSTEAD, SHE LIVED HER LIFE AS MOST HUMANS DO--IN MEDIOCRITY, DOGGED BY THE VAGUE BELIEF THAT SOMEHOW SHE WAS MEANT FOR BIGGER THINGS...

...WHICH, AS SHE GREW OLDER, TURNED INTO A SIMILARLY VAGUE DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THOSE BIGGER THINGS NEVER ENDED UP HAPPENING.

DISEASES NEVER GOT CURED. THE WORLD NEVER GOT BETTER.

AND DECADES LATER, WHEN SHE WAS JUST MINUTES AWAY FROM HER OWN DEATH, THANOS ENTERED STEPHANIE'S LIFE ONCE MORE.

HE GAVE HER A VISION.

UNIVERSAL PANACEA FOUND

WORLD PEACE AWARD

HE SHOWED HER WHAT SHE WAS MEANT TO BE--WHAT SHE WOULD'VE BEEN--SHOULD'VE BEEN--WITHOUT HIM.

IN HER LAST MOMENTS, SHE FINALLY SAW HOW THANOS HAD STOLEN HER LIFE FROM HER, AND GIVEN HER ASHES IN RETURN.

AND THEN SHE DIED.

AND THANOS FELL A LITTLE MORE IN LOVE WITH DEATH THAT DAY. BECAUSE NOT JUST PEOPLE CAN DIE. IDEAS CAN DIE. *FUTURES* CAN DIE.

BUT THE DEATH OF *HOPE* IS BY FAR THE SWEETEST.

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

I'VE LIVED A LONG TIME. AND I'VE SEEN A LOT.

I'VE SEEN HELL, AND I'VE SEEN HEAVEN, TOO. BUT...IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME. AND SOMETIMES... I WONDER...

...I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF.

THE KEHLRASSIANS WERE A MINOR SENTIENT SPECIES, LIVING OFF AT THE EDGE OF THE GALAXY. OUT OF THE WAY.

NOT A HIGH-TECH PEOPLE--MORE AGRARIAN. FARMS AND COMMUNES. RELIGIOUS TYPES, YOU KNOW?

THEY HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR CREATOR.

MY FRIENDS--WE COME TOGETHER ON THIS SACRED DAY TO GIVE OUR THANKS TO THE ONE ABOVE.

FIRST-NAME TERMS, EVEN.

TO HALDUN.

TO HE WHO GAVE TO US ETERNAL LIFE.

FOR HAVE WE NOT BEEN *PROMISED*, IN THE SONGS OF OUR FATHERS?

DID HALDUN NOT SPEAK UNTO US *DIRECTLY*, WHEN VAIN *KING PALOS* PETITIONED HIM IN THE *SECOND AGE*?

IF WE ARE *GOOD* TO EACH OTHER. IF WE ARE *KIND* TO EACH OTHER.

IF, OVER THE COURSE OF OUR LIVES, WE DO MORE TO *HELP* THAN TO *HARM*...IF WE DO NOT *SIN* AGAINST *ONE ANOTHER*...

...OUR *SOULS* WILL RISE *AGAIN*.

FOR UPON DEATH, ALL THAT WE ARE IS *SAVED*--TO REST FOR A TIME IN *SLEEP*, IN HALDUN'S *STORAGE*--

--AND THEN SENT FORTH *AGAIN*, CLEANSED OF MEMORY, TO FIND *NEW* BODIES.

BUT THOSE WHO SIN MUST SLEEP THE *SLEEP OF AEONS*--UNTIL THEY MAY BE *UNDERSTOOD* AND *HEALED*.

SO LET US BE *KIND*, MY FRIENDS.

LET US BE *GOOD*, THAT WE MAY RETURN TO LIFE *SOONER*.

FOR THROUGH HALDUN'S *LOVE*, WE NEED FEAR *NO DEATH*. THERE *IS* NO DEATH.

THERE IS NO END--

WAS.

THERE *WAS* NO END.

THEY KNEW WHO HE WAS.

PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE DID.

TH-THANOS--?

YOU'RE RIGHT. HALDUN *DID* LOVE YOU.

YOUR SPECIES WAS A *HOBBY* FOR H.M--IMMORTALS NEED TO FILL THEIR *TIME*--BUT STILL, HE DIDN'T WANT TO *LOSE* ANY OF YOU.

SO HE MADE SURE YOUR ESSENTIAL SELVES WERE *RETRIEVED* AND *STORED* IF THE BODY *FAILED*--READY FOR *RECORPORATION.*

ANY HE FELT HAD BECOME *CORRUPTED*, HE KEPT FOR *STUDY* AND EVENTUAL *REPAIR.*

AS AFTERLIVES GO, IT WASN'T A *BAD* SYSTEM...

...WHILE IT *LASTED*...

WHAT...

WHAT DID YOU DO?

HE WAS RECORDING YOU ALL ON A QUANTUM SERVER *VERY* ADVANCED--IT WOULD HAVE RUN UNTIL THE END OF TIME. *BEYOND*, PERHAPS.

I DESTROYED IT.

THEN I TORE OFF HIS HEAD AND BURNED HIS *HEART*.

SO. NOW, WHEN YOUR BODIES FAIL, YOU'LL JUST... SWITCH OFF.

AND THEN NOTHING.

NOTHING.

WHY? WHY DID YOU... WHY *WOULD* YOU...

WHY, THANOS?

—

I WAS CURIOUS.

"LET US BE GOOD, THAT WE MAY RETURN SOONER." YOUR WORDS.

ETERNAL LIFE AWAITS THE *JUST.*

BUT WHAT IF THERE *IS* NO ETERNAL LIFE?

I LEFT HALDUN'S *CORPSE* IN THE LANDS TO THE EAST. IF YOU WANT TO GO *LOOK.*

INCONTROVERTIBLE PROOF THAT YOUR GOD IS *DEAD*...THAT YOUR HEAVEN IS *DESTROYED*...

WILL YOU ALL BE *GOOD,* I WONDER?

NOW THAT IT'S ALL FOR *NOTHING?*

I...NO, IT'S--IT'S NOT-- THIS DOESN'T... WE'RE STILL...

WE'RE STILL *HERE.* *NOW.*

WE'RE ALL HERE NOW.

SO WE HAVE TO *TRY.*

AAAHHHH!

AAAAAHHHH! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

BE-- BE CALM, FRIEND--

CALM? CALM?

I'LL GIVE YOU CALM--

"WE HAVE TO TRY." INTERESTING THEORY.

I'LL ENJOY SEEING HOW YOU ALL GET ON.

I'VE SEEN HELL, AND I'VE SEEN HEAVEN, TOO.

BUT IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME... AND SOMETIMES, I WONDER...

...IS HEAVEN STILL THERE?

ARE MY CHILDREN STILL THERE...?

HOO BOY. @#$%& YIKES, RIGHT?

UGH, MAN, I GOTTA TELL YA. I FEEL A LOT LIGHTER AFTER GETTIN' ALL THAT ROTTEN @#$% OFF MY CHEST.

WAIT. AH, DAMN. I'M SO RUDE. I NEVER ASKED YOU YOUR NAME...

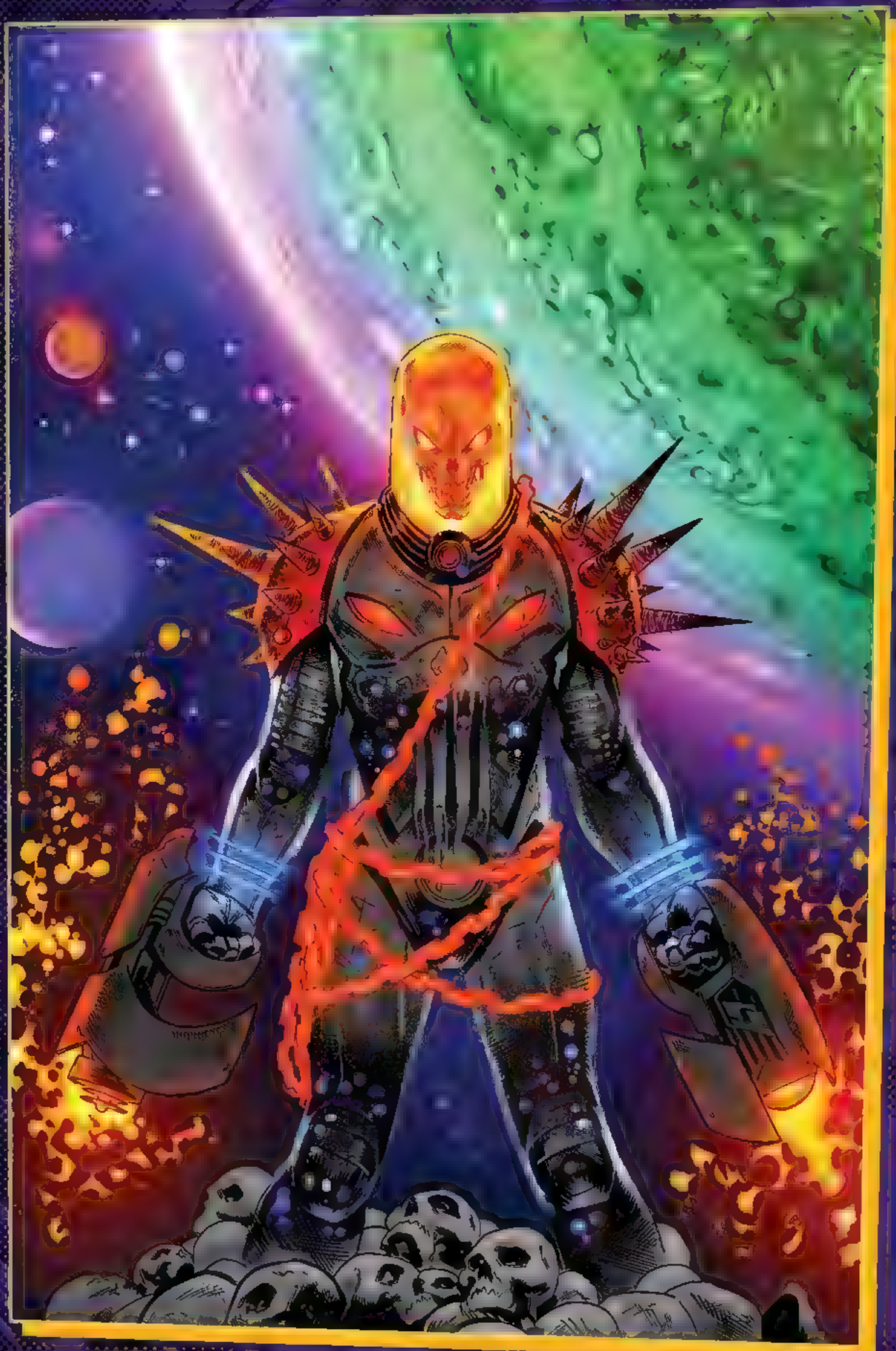
...

I AM... ODIN.

OH, NO WAY! SO, WAIT... IS THIS...

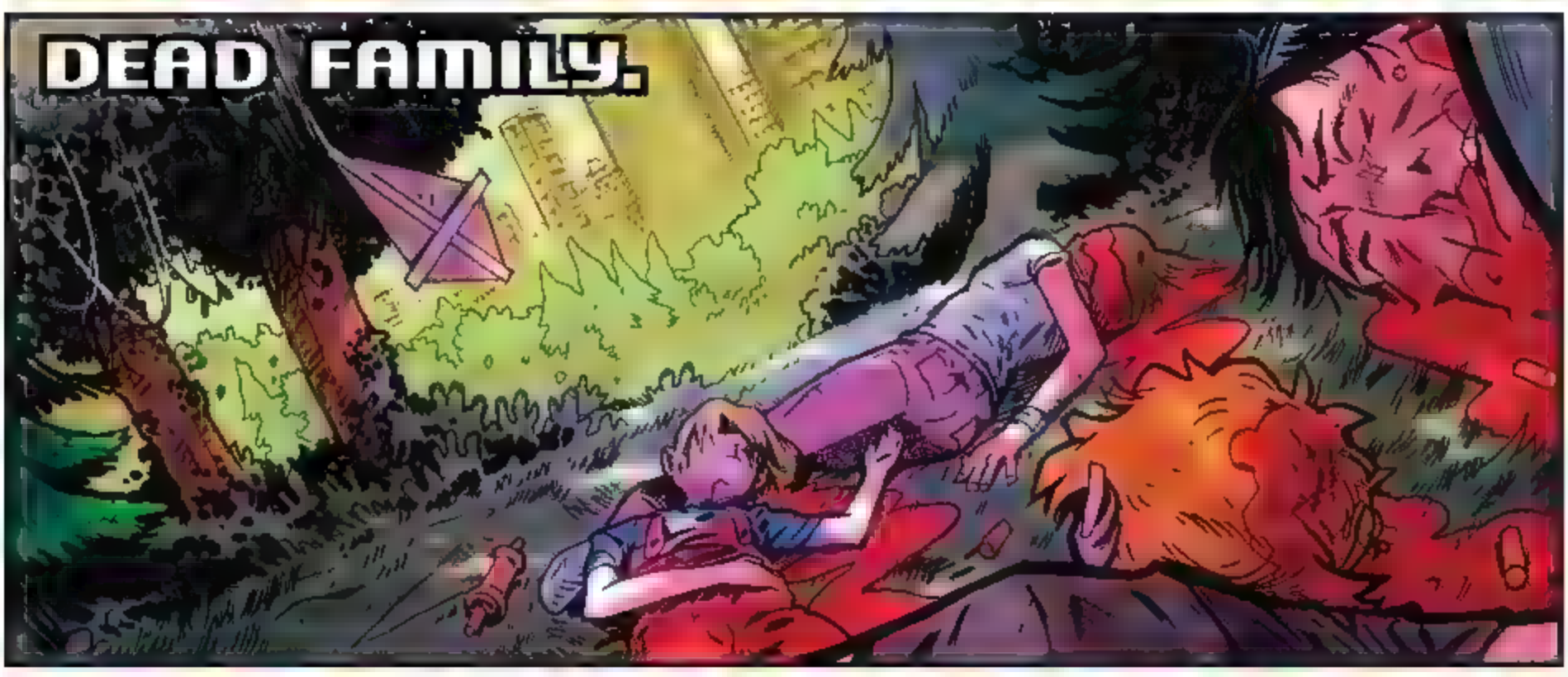
YES. IF YOU ARE QUITE DONE TALKING... FOLLOW ME, FRANCIS CASTLE...

...WELCOME TO VALHALLA.



COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1

SOLDIER.

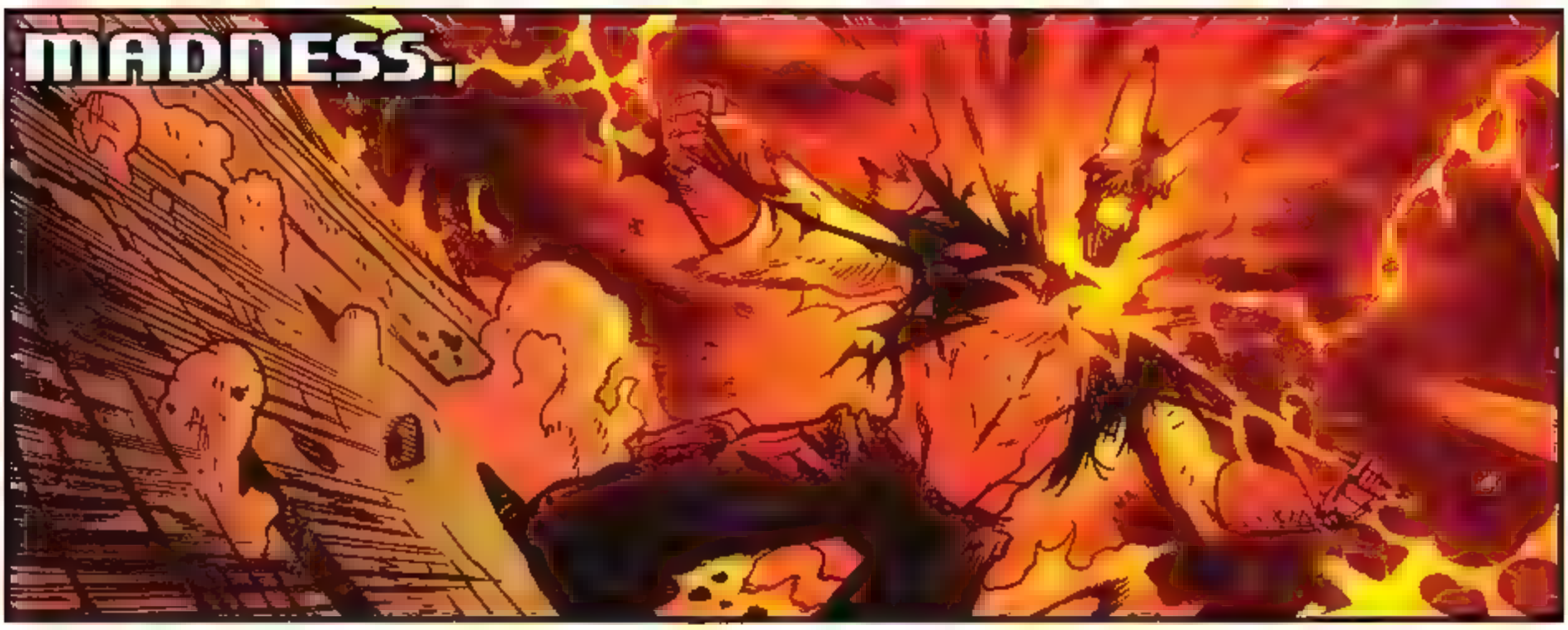

DEAD FAMILY.

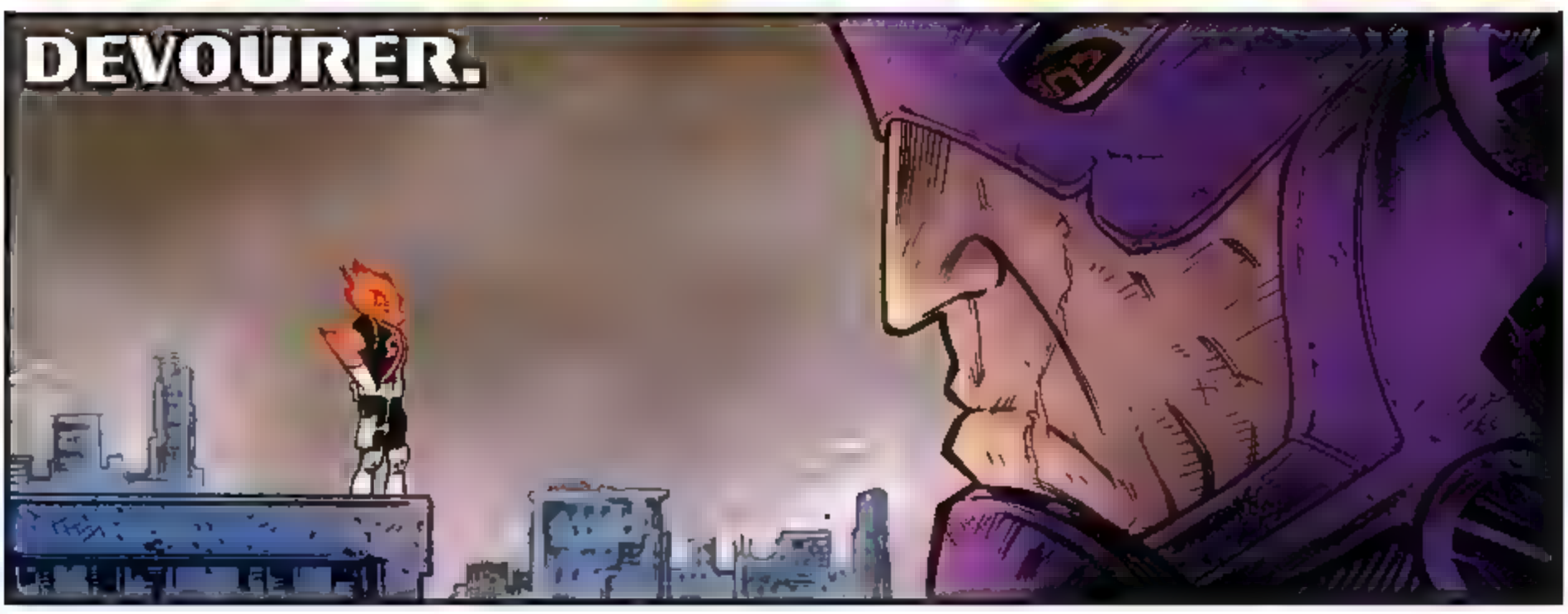
WAR ON TERROR.

DEATH.

HELL.

SPIRIT OF
VENGEANCE.


MADNESS.


DEVOURER.

COSMIC POWER.
THANO'S.
DEATH.
DEATH.

VALHALLA.

BOOM

HA! MORTALS IN VALHALLA. THE OLD MAN MUST BE GOING SOFT...

OR PERHAPS ODIN WAS IN NEED OF A NEW BARMAID.

YOU A GOD, HUH? KILLED A FEW OF THEM.

WHAT ARE YOU THE GOD OF?

BIG TALK?

GRAGH!

KRNCH

AGH!

TH-THAT ALL YOU HAVE IN YOU, MORTAL?

WHO TAUGHT YOU TO FIGHT, EH?

THANOS.

THE DEVIL.

AND THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS.

LATER...

CASTLE!

@#$%@&# HELL...

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

A WARRIOR OF VALHALLA TRADITIONALLY STANDS WHILE ADDRESSED BY ODIN, FRANCIS CASTLE.

YEAH, PLACE AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE, HUH?

I AM TOLD THAT YOU SEVERED THE NOSE OF *KOLDAXE THE GRAVE* WITH A BROKEN SHARD OF GOBLET THIS MORNING.

IS THIS TRUE?

KOLDAXE THE ONE WHO LIKES TO RUN HIS MOUTH ABOUT KILLIN' LITTLE KIDS DURING WAR?

HOW DARE...

KOLDAXE THE GRAVE FOUGHT AGAINST THE ORPHAN HORDES OF NIFFLEHEIM! WHOSE BASTARD GENERALS HID LIKE COWARDS BEHIND AN ARMY OF UNDEAD FAERIE FOLK!

SOME OF WHOM WERE CHILDREN, YES.

THAT'S HIM, THEN. YEAH, I WANTED TO PUT HIM DOWN FOR GOOD, BUT IT TURNS OUT YOU CAN'T REALLY KILL ANYONE HERE.

YOU TAKE A MAN'S NOSE, IT'LL MAKE HIM THINK, THOUGH.

CASTLE...

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WOULD HAVE ANSWERED YOUR INSOLENT TONE BY CHAINING YOU TO THE BACK OF A RAZOR BOAR AND HAVING MY RAVENS FEAST OF YOUR EYELIDS UNTIL SEVEN RAGNAROKS ROSE AND FELL...

BUT I AM TIRED. AND TRUTH BE TOLD, KOLDAXE THE GRAVE IS A MINOR GOD HARDLY WORTHY OF A NOSE.

SO, TELL ME...

...WHY DO YOU HATE THIS PLACE SO?

WHY DO YOU SPIT IN MY FACE AFTER I TORE APART THE VERY FABRIC OF SPACE TO RETRIEVE YOU FROM A DEAD TIMELINE?

WHY MUST YOU RAGE AGAINST YOUR REWARD?

I NEVER ASKED TO BE IN YOUR STUPID HEAVEN, ODIN.

NEVER ASKED FOR A REWARD.

WHEN I'S DOING WHAT I DID BACK ON EARTH...

...ONLY WAY I EVER MADE IT RIGHT WAS...WAS BY TELLIN' MYSELF THAT MY TURN WOULD COME.

MY TURN TO BE PUNISHED.

ONLY...MY TURN NEVER CAME, DID IT?

NO, I SOLD MY SOUL TO THE WORST DEVIL EVER LIVED AND *STILL* GOT ANOTHER CHANCE.

I RODE WITH *THANOS!* AND I GET A NOBLE DEATH?!

I GET A "REWARD"?

WELL, MY FAMILY'S STILL DEAD.

AND NO ONE EVER RIPPED TIME APART TO GIVE *THEM* NOTHIN'.

ASK ME AGAIN WHY I SPIT IN YOUR FACE.

COME WITH ME.

I CHOSE TO BRING YOU TO VALHALLA BECAUSE YOU ARE A WARRIOR OF SOME NOTE, AND YOU WERE, UNJUSTLY I BELIEVED, SLAIN BY THAT INFURIATING HAMMER MY SON, THOR, HOLDS SO DEAR...

...BUT IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE HERE, THEN I WILL NOT FORCE YOU TO STAY.

IN FACT, YOUR WILLFUL OBSTINACY REMINDS ME OF AN OLD MIDGARD SAYING THAT I AM FOND OF...

I BELIEVE IT IS "@@%$ YOU...

"...AND THE HORSE YOU RODE IN ON."

I DON'T GET IT...HOW DID YOU...

I AM ODIN. IF I WANT IT, I HAVE IT.

YOU DO NOT DESERVE TO BE IN VALHALLA, FRANCIS CASTLE. YOU ARE NOT AT REST, AND I SUSPECT YOU NEVER WILL BE.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR ETERNITY WOULD BE BETTER SPENT FULFILLING SOME UNFINISHED VENGEFUL TASK...THEN SO BE IT.

I HAVE THE MAGIC TO SEND YOU TO ANY TIME AND ANY PLACE IN ALL OF CREATION. SAY IT, AND IT SHALL BE DONE.

BUT DECIDE YOUR PATH NOW. I WISH TO WIPE MY HANDS OF THIS PARTICULAR MISTAKE.

WILL... WILL I BE ME?

WILL I KEEP MY MIND THIS TIME?

I WILL DO WHAT I CAN TO MITIGATE THE CHANGE. BUT UNDERSTAND, THE POWERS I RETURN TO YOU ARE NOT FIT FOR THE MIND OF A MORTAL.

NOT EVEN YOU.

NO. I BEEN DOWN THAT ROAD. I AIN'T GOING--

AGGH!

I WASN'T OFFERING A CHOICE.

AGHH! NO!

NO! IT'S TOO MUCH!

IT'S... IT'S...

IT'S ABOUT @#%&@ TIME!

Y'KNOW WHAT? YOU'RE RIGHT, ODIN.

I AIN'T DONE.

THERE IS ONE THING THAT STILL NEEDS DOIN'. THE THING I DREAM ABOUT EVERY DAMN NIGHT.

SOMETHING I SHOULD HAVE DONE A LONG TIME AGO.

SO, YEAH. I KNOW WHERE I WANT TO GO.

I WANT YOU TO SEND ME BACK TO WHERE THIS WHOLE UGLY THING GOT STARTED.

WHERE IT ALL WENT WRONG...

"SEND ME TO TITAN."

HERE'S A QUESTION AIN'T NEVER BEEN ASKED...

...HOW DID THANOS SURVIVE HIS INFANCY TO BECOME WHAT HE BECAME?

WHO LET [redacted] HAPPEN?

AFTER ALL, IN A WORLD WHERE TIME TRAVEL AND TIME-TRAVELING ASSASSINS ARE FAIRLY COMMON...

...HOW COME NO ONE EVER WENT BACK AND KILLED THIS EVIL LITTLE BASTARD IN HIS CRIB?

WELL, HERE'S YOUR ANSWER.

CLICK!

SOMEONE DID.

RNCH.

OR MAYBE NOT.

RAHGGHH!

VWAAM

WHERE IS MY MOTHER?!

DAMMIT, HOW ARE YOU ALREADY LIKE THIS?!

WHO ARE YOU?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

ALL RIGHT, KID...

...LET ME GET A GOOD LOOK AT YOU.

THIS AIN'T MY FIRST TIME GIVING THANOS THE PENANCE STARE...

...NOT BY A LONG SHOT.

BACK WHEN I WAS KING THANOS' BLACK RIGHT HAND, HE USED TO MAKE ME GIVE HIM HIS PENANCE EVERY MORNING.

MAKE ME INFLICT [illegible]E PAIN AND MISERY HE HAD DISHED OUT ON THE UNIVERSE RIGHT BACK INTO HIS EVIL SOUL.

HE LOVED EVERY MINUTE OF IT.

BUT THIS...

AH, DAMMIT. YOU'RE INNOCENT.

...THIS AIN'T THANOS.

NOT YET.

WHAT WAS THAT? IT...IT FELT ODD. LIKE--

STILL, THOUGH.

KRAK

CAN'T KILL HIM.

CAN'T LEAVE HIM.

KID STAYS HERE, HE'LL TURN INTO A MONSTER.

OR, HELL, MAYBE HE WILL NO MATTER WHAT. MAYBE IT DON'T MATTER HOW MUCH YOU CHANGE THINGS...

...HOW MANY CHANCES YOU GET...

...MAYBE THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS REDEMPTION FOR THE DAMNED.

BUT THEN AGAIN...

...@#$% IT.

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #2

FEW HOURS AGO, I STOLE A 3-YEAR-OLD THANOS FROM HIS CRIB ON TITAN.

NOW I WAS THINKING MAYBE I'D GO AND GET HAMMERED UNTIL I CAME UP WITH THE OTHER HALF OF THAT PLAN.

TO THAT END, THIS PLANET HERE IS MARKUS-CENTAURI.

DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP IF IT AIN'T RINGIN' ANY BELLS.

ONLY REASON I KNOW ABOUT IT IS 'CAUSE A BUDDY TOLD ME A STORY ABOUT IT ONCE.

DIE PUNKS

REALLY ONLY TWO THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT.

ONE, THEY GOT A KILLER HAPPY HOUR...

BARTENDER! 'NOTHER ROUND!

...AND TWO, EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING ON THIS PLANET IS ABOUT TEN MINUTES AWAY FROM DYING.

YEAH, JUST PUT IT ON MY TAB.

SO YEAH, ANYWAY, WHERE WAS I...OH, YEAH, SO I FIGURED I'D JUST TAKE YOU FROM YOUR HOME PLANET, AND MAYBE THAT WOULD CHANGE YOUR DESTINY, YOU KNOW?

LIKE MAYBE YOU WOULDN'T GROW UP INTO A CRAZY COSMIC SERIAL KILLER AND ALL THAT.

AH, YEAH, PROBABLY NOT A GOOD REFERENCE. YOU WERE MORE LIKE A...MASS-MURDERING SPACE DICTATOR, I GUESS.

WHAT'S A SERIAL KILLER?

WHAT'S A MASS-MUR--

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT--DRINK YOUR DRINK.

HEY, MAN, YOUR KID CAN'T BE DRINKING IN--

HE'S NOT MY SON! AND I'M OLD ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF US, SO MIND YOUR @#%& BUSINESS.

I'M GETTING MY MANAGER

GET AN ARMY! SEE IF I GIVE A @#$%!

HOW IS IT?

AH, DAMN.

YUCKY. TELL ME MORE ABOUT MURDER.

HEY, YOU! YOU GOTTA GO! WE DON'T ALLOW NO BABIES IN HERE.

NAH, IT'S COOL. THIS BABY IS COOL.

I DON'T CARE. YOU GOTTA GO!

NOT GONNA HAPPEN, CHIEF. I GOT AN APPOINTMENT.

ALL RIGHT, LOOK, PAL, I DON'T WANNA EMBARRASS YOU IN FRONT OF YOUR KID HERE, OKAY? JUST TAKE A HIKE AND THERE AIN'T GOTTA BE NO HASSLE.

I'M MEETING A FRIEND HERE.

BESIDES, WHAT DO YOU CARE? YOU'RE ALL ABOUT TO DIE, ANYWAY.

ALL RIGHT, THAT'S IT! YOU WANNA THREATEN ME, HUH?! LET ME SHOW YOU HOW WE DEAL WITH--

AW, WHAT THE @#&%?!

RAGHHH!

THWAK

OH, FOR THE LOVE OF...

HERK!

KWAP

ALL RIGHT! EVERYBODY BE COOL!

JUST... DAMMIT, LISTEN TO ME!

I'M TRYING REAL HARD TO REHABILITATE THIS DAMN KID, AND I'D REALLY RATHER NOT MURDER ALL OF YOU IN FRONT OF HIM IF I CAN POSSIBLY HELP IT!

WHY COULDN'T I DO A MURDER? AREN'T THEY ALL GOING TO DIE ANYWAY?

I MEAN... YES? BUT THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KILLING PEOPLE AND... LETTING PEOPLE DIE. I GUESS?

DOES EVERYTHING DIE?

YEAH.

EVEN YOU? AND ME?

...LEMME GET BACK TO YOU ON THAT ONE.

HEY!

WHY DO YOU KEEP SAYING WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE?

OH. THAT.

YEAH, I KEPT TELLING YOU, MAN...

"...I'M HERE TO MEET A FRIEND."

MY GOD... HOW DO WE STOP IT?

I'LL TELL YA WHAT, I'LL GO TALK TO HIM FOR YOU.

YOU...YOU WILL?

OF COURSE.

THAT'S WHAT HEROES DO!

WHAT IS THE PURPLE MAN DOING?

OH, HE'S ABOUT TO DEVOUR THIS WHOLE WORLD. IT'S HIS THING.

AND YOU WILL STOP HIM?

OH. HO. NO WAY. BUT NOW THEY'LL DIE WITH HOPE.

AH...

...FUN.

GALAN!

HEY, MAN. IT'S FRANK. YOU GOT A SEC? OR YOU WANT ME TO WAIT UNTIL YOU GET DONE EAT--

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE

GALACTUS WILL NOT BE STOPPED.

GALACTUS HUNGERS.

YEAH, MAN, AND FRANK DON'T CARE.

I GOT A LITTLE SITUATION HERE I COULD USE SOME HELP WITH.

SEE, I WAS TRYING TO THINK BACK ABOUT WHO I EVEN KNEW IN THIS TIME PERIOD, AND THEN I REMEMBERED YOU HAD TOLD ME THIS STORY ABOUT HOW YOU ATE THIS WORLD AND...

WAIT, WHY... DID YOU TELL ME THAT STORY AGAIN?

WHAT HAPPENED HERE THAT WAS SO--

FISHIES!

AGHH!

OH RIGHT! THE SWARM OF STAR SHARKS!

YOU WANT SOME HELP?

GALACTUS REQUIRES NO ASSISTANCE!

BE GONE!

GUARDIANS

AGAIN! AGAIN!

HE SAVED US!

COOL, COOL. SO, HEY, ANYWAY, AS I WAS SAYING ABOUT--

YOU! GALACTUS HAS HAD--

--ENOUGH!

ZZAARRKK

HEY, WHAT THE HELL, MAN?! I GOT A BABY HERE!

YOU... WITHSTOOD THE POWER COSMIC...

...WHAT ARE YOU?

I TOLD YOU!

SHFF SHFF

I'M FRANK.

FRANK...

LOOK, YOU GOT WEIRD COSMIC TELEPATHIC MIND POWERS, RIGHT? WHY DON'T WE STOP DANCING AND YOU JUST CUT TO THE--

VERY WELL.

GALACTUS RIPS MY MIND OPEN SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS.

IF I WASN'T ALREADY INSANE, I WOULD BE NOW.

FOR ANYONE ELSE, HAVING THE DEVOURER SCOUR THROUGH THEIR BRAIN WITH THE AWARENESS OF A SENTIENT GALAXY WOULD BE TOO MUCH.

BUT ME, WELL...I BEEN HERE BEFORE.

ME AND GALACTUS...WE USED TO ROLL THROUGH THE STARS HUNTING THANOS DURING HIS LAST STAND TO KILL EVERY LIVING THING IN THE UNIVERSE.

WE FAILED.

HE WON.

AND I ENDED UP AS THANOS' SLAVE.

I GOT A LOTTA THINGS TO MAKE UP FOR.

DONE A WHOLE HELL OF A LOT WRONG, AND GOT A WHOLE MESS OF REGRETS...

...BUT MY TIME WITH GALACTUS HUNTING EVIL IN THE ABYSS?

THOSE WERE SOME OF THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE.

...FRANK?

GALAN! YEAH, MAN, IT'S ME!

I WAS NOT EXPECTING...I SAW *SO MUCH* INSIDE OF YOU YOU AND I...WE WERE... WE WILL BE...

FRIENDS!

ALLIES.

RIGHT. YES.

YOU JOINED THIS MAD TITAN THIS THANOS. WE HUNTED H M FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS AND WHEN I FELL YOU JOINED HIS RANKS.

I KNOW THAT LOOKS BAD. BUT I HAD A PLAN!

...I JOINED HIM IN THE BEGINNING THINKING THAT I COULD GET CLOSE TO HIM AND SLIT HIS THROAT IN HIS SLEEP.

BUT THEN... I...

...I GOT LOST.

MY MIND WASN'T...IT DIDN'T WORK GOOD.

AND--AND BEFORE I KNEW IT I LOOKED UP AND I HAD FALLEN TOO FAR...

I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO NOT BE THAT THING HE MADE ME BE.

AND NOW YOU HAVE BROUGHT THE CHILD TO ME.

YEAH, RIGHT. I WAS THINKING MAYBE WE--

SO THAT WE MAY KILL IT

OH. UM... ACTUALLY, NO.

I'M TRYING A DIFFERENT THING NOW.

I WAS GONNA TRY TO REHABILITATE THE KID, AND MAYBE HE WOULDN'T--

YOU HAVE HAD MORE CHANCES THAN MOST TO END THIS TERROR, FRANK CASTLE

MORE CHANCES THAN THE BOY DESERVES

GIVE THANOS TO GALACTUS

GALACTUS WILL KILL THE CHILD.

YOU KNOW WHAT, BUDDY?! I'VE HAD ENOUGH BIG PURPLE DUDES ORDERING ME AROUND. IF YOU WANT THE KID, YOU GOTTA GO--

SKY BABY!

SKY BABY!

OH. THE WATCHER IS HERE.

"AHOY BABY." HEH.

SEE, GALANT UATU ONLY SHOWS UP IN TIMES OF GREAT CHANGE! THIS IS GOING TO WORK!

I'M GONNA TURN THIS AROUND AND--

INCORRECT.

YOU ARE ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE A UNIVERSAL CONSTANT, FRANCIS CASTLE.

LIKE TRYING TO LEASH THE PHOENIX OR STOP THE MARCH OF TIME.

THE CHILD'S PATH IS IMMUTABLE.

THANOS HAS BEEN CHOSEN BY AN UNDEFEATED OPPONENT.

WELL, THEN, IF IT'S SO DAMN IMPOSSIBLE, WHY DID YOU COME HERE, YA DAMN GHOUL?!

I HAVE COME TO WITNESS THE WORST CHOICE THAT ANY LIVING BEING HAS EVER MADE IN THE HISTORY OF THOUGHT.

AND THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES THEREOF.

TPPT.

NAH. YOU KNOW WHAT? I'M SICK OF ALL THIS.

I'M GONNA RAISE THIS KID MYSELF. AND BOTH OF YOU BIG-HEADED @*#%S CAN GO @*#% YOURSELF.

AND THERE IT IS.

WHAT? WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

YOU...YOU SINCERELY DO NOT SEE HOW THIS IS A BAD IDEA?

WELL, I DON'T SEE NO "IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES" SO FAR, SO I GUESS THE GALAXY'S GREATEST PEEPING TOM IS WRONG, HUH?!

FRANCIS...BY MAKING THIS CHOICE, YOU'VE JUST CREATED A TIMELINE IN WHICH *THE PUNISHER RAISED THANOS AS A CHILD.*

OKAY, SO?

WATCH THIS.

GAH!

BOOM BOOM BOOM

UNF!

FRANK CASTLE. PUNISHER.

THE RIDER. WHATEVER.

FWMP

STEP AWAY FROM THE BABY.

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

MY NAME IS NATHAN SUMMERS.

I'M FROM THE FUTURE...

...AND WE'RE THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY.

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #3

I AM UATU THE WATCHER!

SWORN TO NEVER INTERFERE, IT IS MY DUTY TO OBSERVE AND CHRONICLE EVENTS OF GREAT COSMIC IMPORTANCE!

BEHOLD, AS I HAVE BEEN TASKED WITH OBSERVING A TIME-DISPLACED *FRANK CASTLE* WHO HAS INEXPLICABLY BEEN INFUSED WITH THE *COSMIC POWERS* BEFITTING A *HERALD OF GALACTUS!*

AS WELL AS THE *DEMONIC FUEL* THAT DRIVES ALL THOSE KNOWN AS *GHOST RIDERS!*

AND, AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH, THIS BRAZEN LOON HAS NOW TRAVELED BACK IN TIME AND HAS TAKEN THE *INFANT THANOS* UNDER HIS BONY WING IN AN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY.

IT IS, OF COURSE, A *LITERAL* FOOL'S ERRAND.

BUT EVEN ONE SUCH AS I MUST ADMIT...

"...IT IS QUITE A LOT OF FUN TO WATCH."

WHY DO YOU RUN? CAN YOU NOT KILL THESE PEOPLE?

NO!

I MEAN... YES, I COULD KILL ALL OF THEM JUST...SO, SO EASILY.

I HAVE COSMIC HELLFIRE POWERS. IT WOULDN'T EVEN BE CLOSE.

CAP! SLOW 'EM DOWN!

ON IT.

THEN WHY RUN?

BECAUSE, DAMMIT! I'M TRYING REAL HARD TO NOT DO VIOLENCE STUFF IN FRONT OF YOU!

RAGHH!

JUST...JUST LET ME THINK! GOTTA BE A WAY TO--

AGH!

CRASH

NO ONE TAKE ANOTHER STEP! YOU THINK I'M AFRAID OF SOME...

WHO ARE YOU GUYS AGAIN?

WE TOLD YOU WHO WE ARE, FRANK...

JUGGERDUCK. A DUCK NAMED HOWARD IN POSSESSION OF THE GEM OF CYTORRAK. DUCKING UNSTOPPABLE.

WE'RE THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY.

CAPTAIN MARVEL. KAMALA KHAN. BUT IN THE FUTURE AND ALL GROWN UP. NOW WITH ADDED SHIELD!

IRON GROOT. ROCKET PILOTING A MECH-SUIT MADE OUT OF HIS TREE BUDDY. SHUT UP, YOU LIKE IT.

JUBILEE. 'NUFF SAID.

WE COME FROM THE FUTURE. A FUTURE YOU CREATED WHEN YOU RAISED THAT MONSTROSITY.

WE CAME TO STOP YOU.

OLDER MAN CABLE. TIME-TRAVELING LEADER. TOO OLD FOR THIS @#$%.

NOW GIVE US THE BABY.

OH, OKAY. COOL.

LISTEN, I WOULD LOVE TO @IVE YOU THIS BABY, EXCEPT_I DON'T WANT TO, AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR DUMB FUTURE.

I MEAN... IT'S MALLEABLE, RIGHT?! THE FUTURE CAN BE CHANGED! I CAN DO THIS!

I'M RAISING THIS KID, AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT!

...AND YET...

WHAT?

NOTHING CHANGED! YOU GAVE YOUR LITTLE SPEECH AND WE'RE ALL STILL HERE! HE'S GOING TO TURN EVIL, STUPID!

RIGHT. I'M STUPID.

'CAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO FORGOT ABOUT THE GIANT PURPLE DUDE.

CASTLE! DO NOT MAKE THIS UGLIER THAN IT NEEDS TO BE! JUST GIVE US THE KID AND--

WAIT, WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?

AAAA

UHH... S-SLIDE...

UGH, OKAY... JUST...JUST GIMME A MINUTE, OKAY? CABLE IS STILL ALIVE, FOR WHATEVER REASON.

DUDE. YOU OKAY?

S-SLIDE BY ONE!

WWWOMP

SLIDE BY WHAT? WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT MEA--

WHAT IT MEANS...

WHAT IS THIS?!

...IS I GO BACK TO MY TIMELINE AND SPEND TWENTY YEARS OR SO PERFECTING THE PERFECT SOLUTION TO TAKE CARE OF OUR GALACTUS PROBLEM...

...COURTESY OF HANK PYM.

YOU GOT IT

UNHAND GALACTUS!

NO! GALACTUS WILL HAVE H S VENGEANCE!

BOOM!

KA-CHAK!

GALACTUS SHALL RET JUUJRRRNN..!!

WHAT THE %@#& WAS THAT?! DID YOU JUST KILL--

NAH, PYM PARTICLES WEAR OFF AFTER A WHILE. HE'LL BE FINE

THAT'S NOT COOL, MANI GALACTUS NEVER DID ANYTHING TO ANYONE AND YOU JUST SHOT HIM INTO SPACE?

LISTEN, YOUR BEEF IS WITH ME! SO IF YOU WANNA THROW DOWN THEN LET'S JUST--

HOLD THAT THOUGHT.

DON'T YOU DARE!

SLIDE BY ONE.

DAMN!

VWOOOMP

ZZAAK

OAH!

YOU WERE SAYING?

I GOT A LIST A MILE LONG OF SOME PRETTY POWERFUL FOLKS BACK HOME *JUST BEGGING* TO COME BACK AND END YOU TWO.

YEAH, WELL, I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TIME-TRAVELING CHUMPS TRY! 'CAUSE IF YOU WANT HIM, YOU GOTTA GO THROUGH--

FINE.

GUARDIANS, KILL THAT BABY!

YIKES. THAT IS A BRUTAL BATTLE CRY, GUYS.

ARE WE RUNNING AGAIN?

NAH. THIS IS DIFFERENT. THIS IS A STRATEGIC RUNNING AWAY.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT MEANS I'M GONNA NEED A SITTER.

HEY, WATCHER!

WATCH THIS BABY!

TOSS!

AND DON'T LET HIM SEE WHAT I'M DOING!

@#%'S ABOUT TO GET REAL @#%&$ EXPLICIT.

I'M TRYING TO CHANGE. I TRULY AM.

BUT THIS...

...GOOD OR BAD. COSMIC OR DEMONIC...

...THIS IS WHAT I WAS PUT ON THIS EARTH TO DO.

COME ON!

SLIDE BY TEN!

WOMP

NEVER WAS GOOD WITH CHANGE.

I REMEMBER BACK BEFORE ALL OF THIS, BEFORE I BECAME WHATEVER IT IS I AM NOW.

THIS IS ALL YOU GOT? A COUPLE OF TELEPORTERS AND A MAGICIAN?

S-SLIDE BY TWENTY!

WOMP

I'D BE SITTING IN TRAFFIC, OR WATCHIN' MY KID OR SOMETHING_ BUT REALLY, I'D BE RIGHT HERE.

WHERE I BELONG.

YOU KNOW WHAT, CABLE? I THINK YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.

THIS FUTURE OF YOURS IS PATHETIC!

SLIDE BY THIRTY!

WOMP

IN THE WAR.

MY WIFE, MARIA. SHE USED TO LOOK AT ME WITH HORROR IN HER EYES IN THOSE MOMENTS.

YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS! TRY HARDER!

BRING IT!

"FRANK, HONEY..." SHE'D SAY...

SLIDE BY ONE HUNDRED!

WOMP

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT THE WHOLE WORLD."

C-COME ON!

GAH!

RRRR...

UATU!

GET THE KID OUT OF HERE!

KKRACK!

THANOS, RUN!

RUN!

KRACK

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER.

AH!

WAIT... WHY AM I NOT...

AW, HELL.

RAGHHH!

DAMMIT, THANOS! WHAT DID I TELL YOU?!

NO MURDER...

THAT'S RIGHT! NO MURDERS!

SL-SLIDE BY--

BWAM BWAM BWAM

HEY! HEY, NO! NO MORE SLIDING!

AGGH!

HEY! YOU LISTEN TO ME!

YOU LEAVE ME AND MY KID ALONE! YOU [redacted] ME?

Y-YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, FRANK!

THE THANOS YOU RAISE_

YOU THINK YOU KNOW, BUT YOU DON'T!

HE'S WORSE! OH GOD...HE'S SO MUCH WORSE!

PLEASE! PLEASE, FRANK, YOU HAVE TO--

BLAM!

OH, NO WAY...

WMP

HEY, DAD.
SORRY I'M LATE.

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #4

BY AND LARGE I'M NOT A MAN THAT'S EASILY HAUNTED.

I'VE DONE MY BEST TO NOT LET THE THINGS I'VE DONE CRAWL INTO MY SOUL AND TWIST ME UP.

I DON'T DWELL ON THE SCUM I'VE PUT DOWN. I DON'T KEEP THEIR UNBLINKING FACES IN MY HEAD.

BUT THAT DON'T MEAN I DON'T HAVE REGRETS.

A WHILE BACK, AND A FEW MILLION YEARS FROM NOW, I FOUND MYSELF WORKING AS THE BLACK RIGHT HAND OF THE MAD KING THANOS.

IT'S THE WORST DAMN THING I EVER DONE.

IT'S WHY I'M DOING THIS. STEALING BABY THANOS FROM HIS CRIB AND ALL'A THAT.

IF I CAN CHANGE HIS DESTINY, THEN...MAYBE THERE'S HOPE FOR ME TOO.

THEN...THAT'S THE PROBLEM, RIGHT?

IF I'M A MONSTER...

...IF I'M TRULY DAMNED...

...WHAT THE HELL AM I CHANGING HIM INTO?

COME ON. WE NEED TO GO.

THANOS? THIS IS...

JUST GIVE ME A SECOND, YEAH?

WHO IS THIS UGLY MAN?

THAT'S YOU. THE VERSION OF YOU I RAISED. FROM THE FUTURE.

OH

YEAH, SORRY.

PLOP

MMMM.

ARE YOU A COSMIC SERIAL KILLER?

HA. NO, LITTLE ONE. NO, THAT'S NOT ME. NOT ANYMORE.

WHAT ARE YOU?

I'M THE PUNISHER.

THMP

AH, FOR @#%&'S SAKE...

WE NEED TO HURRY, FATHER. THE PORTAL WILL NOT HOLD FOR MUCH LONGER, AND MY TIME PERIOD IS THE ONLY PLACE WE WILL BE SA--

YEAH, YEAH, SURE.

LET'S GO SEE WHATEVER NEW GODFORSAKEN HELL I'VE CREATED THIS TIME...

WAIT...

WHAT THE @#$%?!

FWP

THANOS... THIS...THIS IS BEAUTIFUL.

YOU DID THIS?

WE DID THIS.

TOGETHER.

THIS IS THE CULMINATION OF ALL OF OUR WORK, FATHER.

NO CRIME. NO PREDATION. A PLACE WHERE FAMILIES CAN FEEL SAFE. WHERE THEY CAN WATCH THEIR CHILDREN GROW AND BLOSSOM.

THIS IS OUR DREAM.

THIS IS OUR HOME.

I_

I KNEW IT.

I KNEW THERE WAS HOPE.

MUNCH

...FATHER...

THERE IS SOMETHING I NEED TO SHOW YOU.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

CASTLE

IT WAS_ DIFFICULT. WE SCOURED HEAVEN AND EARTH, BUT WE FREED YOU FROM YOUR CURSE.

AND FROM THERE, IT WAS A MATTER OF--

NO. STOP.

I DON'T WANT TO KNOW HOW I DIED.

I JUST...

WAS IT GOOD?

MY LIFE?

DID IT MATTER?

FATHER, YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING I KNOW. IT WAS...IT IS MY GREATEST HONOR TO HAVE--

WAIT. WHAT IS THAT?

FATHER, WAIT...

IS THAT SMOKE?

OH...

OH MY GOD.

WHAT...

LIBERTY IN PENANCE

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

THANOS, WHAT IS THIS?

YES. THIS.

THOSE PEOPLE--THEY DIDN'T WANT THE PEACE WE BROUGHT TO THEM.

THEY WANTED CRIME. MURDER. INJUSTICE. HATE.

IT COULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO SPREAD.

AND SO I SEPARATED THEM. I CAST THEM OUT IT IS THE MERCIFUL THING TO DO, YES?

THIS IS WHERE CABLE AND HIS LITTLE REBELLION SPAWNED FROM.

MY MICRO-SENTRIES HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE IN THE PAST AT QUELLING THESE--INSURGENCIES THAT RISE FROM THE CAMPS. BUT SOMEHOW THIS ONE SLIPPED--

CAMPS?

THIS... THIS ISN'T RIGHT. THIS IS INSANE.

THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED! THESE PEOPLE CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO HURT ANYONE. THEY'RE AN.MALS. THEY HAVE TO BE--

THAT IS *NOT* WHAT I DO! THAT IS *NOT* WHAT I WANT!

YOU'RE MAKING THEM *SUFFER!* YOU'RE TORTURING THEM!

I'M *PUNISHING* THEM!

THIS IS WRONG. YOU'RE LEAVING THOSE PEOPLE TO DIE OUT THERE.

WHY IS IT WRONG?

YOU WERE GOING TO LEAVE AN ENTIRE PLANET TO DIE WHEN THE PURPLE GIANT CAME TO EAT THEM.

YOU SAID KILLING PEOPLE WAS BAD, BUT YOU SAID IT WAS OKAY TO LEAVE THEM.

"THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KILLING PEOPLE AND LETTING THEM DIE."

HOW--

WAIT...

DAMMIT.

HOW DID I END UP SURROUNDED BY TWO OF YOU?

AGAIN?

BECAUSE IT IS OUR DESTINY, FATHER.

WE HAVE BOTH BEEN CHOSEN AS INSTRUMENTS OF--

NO. DON'T SAY THAT.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS DESTINY. WE CAN CHANGE THINGS, THANOS. WE DON'T HAVE TO BE...

...WHATEVER WE'VE BECOME.

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO? YOU RAISED ME TO NOT KILL, AND YET...WE CANNOT ALLOW THESE PEOPLE TO INTERMINGLE WITH THE GOOD.

THEY WILL NEVER ACCEPT THE LIFE WE HAVE GIVEN THEM.

THEY ARE INCAPABLE OF PEACE.

THEY CAN NEVER BE REDEEMED

THEY DESERVE A CHANCE TO BE FORGIVEN, THANOS! YOU CAN'T JUST DOLE OUT DEATH SENTENCES BECAUSE PEOPLE DON'T FALL IN LINE.

YOU'LL FORGIVE ME IF THAT FALLS A TOUCH HOLLOW COMING FROM *YOUR* MOUTH, FATHER!

THAT IS NOT WHO I AM!

YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE PROTECTING!

NO_

IS THAT... ME...

...AND MY WIFE?

HOW... HOW IS THIS--

I WAS THERE.

WHEN WE LEFT TITAN, WE SETTLED BACK HERE, ON EARTH. YOU RAISED ME, FRANK. AND THIS TIME, WHEN THE MEN CAME TO KILL YOUR FAMILY...

...I STOPPED THEM.

NO. NO, THAT'S NOT REAL.

THIS ISN'T REAL.

DAD...

THAT IS NOT ME. THAT IS NOT MY WIFE! NONE OF THIS IS--

WHY ARE YOU SAYING THIS?

BECAUSE IF SHE'S STILL HERE...

...IF SHE'S STILL ALIVE...

...WHY DID THIS ALL STILL HAPPEN? WHY IS HE IN THERE? WHY DOES HE ALLOW YOU TO DO THIS?!

HIS LIFE IS PERFECT! AND... AND...AND HE STILL ENDS UP WORKING FOR YOU?! NO. NO, THAT CAN'T BE--

BECAUSE PEOPLE DON'T CHANGE.

BECAUSE THIS IS WHO YOU WERE ALL ALONG.

NO.

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.

IT WAS YOU!!

YOU MADE ME THIS.

IN EVERY DIMENSION, IN EVERY TIMELINE, YOU DAMN ME.

TURN ME INTO SOME KIND OF MONSTER.

NOT AGAIN.

PUT THE GUN DOWN, FATHER...

I AM *NOT* YOUR FATHER!

THIS ENDS NOW, THANOS.

I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS A LONG TI--

SNAP

YOU FORGET WHO YOU THREATEN, OLD MAN

WACK

CASTLE OD

RAAGGH!

THIS DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

GRAB

WE COULD HAVE RULED THIS WORLD TOGETHER!

WHAM

BUT WORRY NOT, FATHER.

THERE IS STILL A PLACE FOR YOU HERE...

...AS MY HERALD.

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #5

I'VE BEEN A WHOLE MESS OF DIFFERENT THINGS IN MY TIME.

JOIN ME, FATHER.

ACCEPT WHAT YOU WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO BE...

A SON.

SOLDIER.

HUSBAND.

FATHER.

WIDOWER.

HERO.
VILLAIN.
VIGILANTE.

MURDERER.

MONSTER.

DEVIL.

(TECHNICALLY I WAS AN ANGEL ONCE TOO. BUT I DON'T MUCH TALK ABOUT THAT.)

BEEN A HERALD OF GALACTUS, A DEVIL AND EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING YOU CAN DAMN WELL IMAGINE.

THERE AIN'T AN INCH A' ME I AIN'T SOLD OR BROKEN. NOT A SIN I AIN'T COMMITTED.

NOT A DAY THAT GOES BY WHERE I DON'T THINK ABOUT ALL THE PEOPLE I COULD HAVE SAVED...OR THE THINGS I GOT WRONG ALONG THE WAY...

BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED IN ALL MY TIME, IT'S THAT...

...IT'S OKAY TO MAKE MISTAKES...

...AS LONG AS YOU ONLY MAKE THEM ONCE.

WHAM

AGAIN! AGAIN!

NO.

NEVER AGAIN.

THANOS, LISTEN TO ME. NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS...

...THIS ISN'T ON YOU. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ANYTHING YOU DON'T WANNA BE.

YOU REMEMBER THAT.

I...DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

YOU WILL. OR YOU WON'T. EITHER WAY, DO ME A FAVOR, YEAH?

DON'T WATCH ME NOW.

OBEY

BOOM

IN CASE I WASN'T CLEAR_

_THAT WAS A NO.

THEN YOU DIE!

AGGH!!!

I BEEN DEAD LONGER THAN YOU BEEN ALIVE, BOY.

I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU.

BOOM

AND I'M DONE LIVING ON MY KNEES.

BOOM

HEH... I REMEMBER THE LAST TIME YOU SAID THAT TO ME.

IT WAS WHEN I BUILT THIS PLACE.

YOU DEFIED ME THEN. AND THEN I PUT YOU IN A GRAVE.

WE HAVE DONE THIS DANCE BEFORE, FATHER.

YOU LOSE THIS FIGHT!

WHAT FIGHT?

VWWAAAAAAAMM

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH I HOLD BACK?! TO NOT DESTROY WORLDS AS I WALK?!

I TRIED TO CHANGE YOU! TO CHANGE THIS!

P-PLEASE! FATHER, PLEASE!

YOU ARE NOT MY SON!

MY CHILDREN ARE DEAD!

AND THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN CHANGE THAT!

VWWAA-

KOOOOOM

NOTHING!

HEH...

IS THAT...

IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE?

NO.

YOU GOT ONE MORE THING COMIN'.

PENANCE.

HEH, A GIFT, THEN?

YOU HAVE TRIED THIS BEFORE.

YOUR PENANCE STARE DOES NOT WORK ON ME LIKE IT DOES THE OTHERS.

UNLIKE YOU...THANOS IS NOT BURDENED WITH REGRET.

NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT A STARE, BOY.

I SAID PENANCE.

FWOOOOSH

RKRIPP

PENANCE MEANS PUNISHMENT, YOU UGLY SONOFABITCH.

CRSH

OH. HEY.

YOU'RE ALL...FREE NOW. I GUESS.

ARE... ARE YOU HIM?

ARE YOU FRANK CASTLE?

MORE OR LESS, YEAH. I GUESS SO. WHO ARE YOU?

MY NAME IS HOPE.

IS CABLE WITH YOU?

UM. HE'LL BE ALONG SOON, HONEY. HE GOT KINDA TIED UP.

OKAY. WELL, WHEN YOU SEE HIM, WILL YOU GIVE HIM THIS?

I FIXED IT FOR HIM WHEN HE WAS GONE. HIS WAS RUNNING OUT OF POWER ON ACCOUNT OF ALL THE TIME-JUMPS HE MADE.

HEH...

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED.

OH, FRANK, HE'S SO CUTE.

WHERE'D YOU COME FROM, LITTLE GUY?

THANOS HAS SOILED HIMSELF.

PUT HIM DOWN!

PUT THE BABY DOWN AND STEP AWAY SLOWLY.

H-HERE...JUST TAKE HIM. JUST PLEASE DON'T HURT M--

DON'T BEG.

DON'T EVER BEG.

...FRANK?

YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE ME BACK NOW, AREN'T YOU?

I AM.

THEN WON'T THIS TIMELINE DIE?

YEAH, YEAH, IT WILL.

BUT AT LEAST THEY'LL DIE WITH HOPE.

SLIDE BY TWO.

TITAN.
HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.

I BEEN A WHOLE HELL OF A LOT OF THINGS IN MY TIME.

I THOUGHT MAYBE IF I WENT BACK AND FIXED THE WORST ONE OF 'EM ALL, IT WOULD MEAN THERE'D BE HOPE FOR ME TOO.

TURNS OUT THAT AIN'T THE WAY LIFE BEHAVES.

MAYBE THERE AIN'T NO EASY FIX FOR WHAT I AM.

FOR WHAT I'VE BECOME.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE THIS NEW ROAD OF MINE IS GOING TO LEAD ME.

BUT I KNOW I AIN'T GONNA START ON IT BY KILLING NO BABY.

I DON'T CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND NONE OF THIS TIME TRAVEL STUFF, BUT I'M PRAYIN' LIKE HELL THAT MAYBE SOME OF THIS GOT THROUGH TO YOU, KID.

AND IF NOT, WELL...

...I'LL BE SEEING YOU AROUND.

THANK YOU, FRANCIS.

AH, FOR THE LOVE OF @#$%...

THANKS FOR WHAT?!

WELL, SOMEONE HAD TO TEACH THE BOY TO KILL.

AH, @#$%!

CAN... CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

OF COURSE.

WHY HIM?

WHY WON'T YOU JUST LEAVE HIM ALONE?

CAN'T THERE BE... A--A SECOND CHANCE?

NOT WITH ME. NO.

ONCE I HAVE CHOSEN A BEING AS MY LIVING INSTRUMENT ON THE MORTAL PLANE, I'M AFRAID THEIR PATH IS IN STONE.

AND I CHOOSE... *MANY* CHILDREN, FRANCIS CASTLE.

YEAH, WELL...

GET IN LINE, SISTER.

I AIN'T DONE JUST YET.

I DON'T KNOW IF THERE'S REDEMPTION OUT THERE FOR SOMETHING LIKE ME.

HELL, I DON'T KNOW IF I'D DESERVE IT IF THERE WAS...

BUT HONESTLY?

FRROAR

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

ROOOO

THANOS LEGACY #1

THANOS, AS IT HAS BEEN SAID BY SOME, IS THE INEVITABLE END OF ALL THINGS.

BUT WHEN HIS TIME LUMBERING ACROSS THIS UNIVERSE COMES TO ITS BLOODY AND EVENTUAL END...

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE...

AT THE END OF HIS HORRID REIGN...

...WHAT WILL BE THE LEGACY OF THE MAD TITAN?

THANOS LEGACY

AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, THANOS RECENTLY KILLED HIS OWN LEGACY...

THE TITAN WAS STOLEN OUT OF TIME AND TAKEN TO THE FUTURE BY A COSMIC-FUELED SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE WHOSE STORY IS HARDLY WORTH NOTING.

tch

THERE, THANOS CAME FACE-TO-FACE, RATHER LITERALLY, WITH HIS ULTIMATE FAILING. HIS GREATEST TRAGEDY.

HIMSELF.

AT THE END OF TIME, THANOS MET THE ELDER KING THANOS. A BROKEN TITAN BROUGHT LOW BY HIS ENDLESS PURSUIT OF POWER AND DEATH.

THAT PARTICULAR STORY HAS BEEN TOLD. THAT CHAPTER CLOSED. AND REALLY, THE LESS SAID ABOUT IT HERE, THE BETTER.

BUT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS TALE, IT SHOULD BE KNOWN THAT IN THE END, **THANOS WON.** HE DENIED HIS OWN FUTURE. HE UNMADE HIS OWN END.

BUT THANOS IS NOT, AS WE WILL SOON SEE, IMMUNE TO THE **TRUEST END** OF ALL THINGS.

NO. FOR ALL OF HIS IMMORTAL WILL AND MURDEROUS DRIVE, THE STORY OF THE MAD TITAN WILL END THE SAME WAY ALL OF OUR STORIES WILL END...

EARTH.
A VERY LONG TIME FROM NOW...

BUT FIRST...

...A REQUIEM.

THANOS... DO NOT DO THIS!

DO NOT LEAVE ME CRIPPLED AND BROKEN AND ALIVE!

YOU ARE ONLY DOOMING YOURSELF!

THIS IS YOUR FATE YOU ARE SEALING, BOY! THIS IS YOUR END!

NNAAA

BUT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT MEANT.

NOT REALLY.

HE SWORE TO HIS FUTURE SELF THAT HE WOULD WORK UNTIL HE WAS ASH AND BONE TO ERASE HIM.

AND THANOS MEANT IT. AS HE MEANS EVERYTHING.

BUT IN A MILLION LIFETIMES, HE COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN WHAT COURSE HIS ACTIONS WOULD PLOT THAT DAY.

NEVERTHELESS, THANOS FACED HIS END.

AND HE TURNED HIS BACK ON IT.

AND HE WALKED AWAY.

BUT WHERE DID THANOS GO?

HOW DID HE ERASE HIMSELF?

DID THE MAD TITAN CHANGE HIS WAYS?

WHUD

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT HIS TIME IN THE FUTURE, THE VISION OF HIS PITIFUL END, COOLED HIS VICIOUS AND TYRANNICAL HEART?

IS THERE A CHANCE THAT THANOS LOOKED INSIDE OF HIMSELF AND REALIZED THAT AFTER HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION TO DEATH AND DISARRAY...

...THAT PERHAPS FINALLY, AFTER ALL OF THIS TIME...HE WOULD SIMPLY...REST?

THE ANSWER, OF COURSE...

...IS NO.

INSTEAD, THANOS' QUEST TO KILL HIS OWN FUTURE BEGAN NOT WITH PEACE AND INACTION, BUT WITH A PETTY ACT OF VENGEFUL MAINTENANCE IN THE MOST HORRID PLACE IMAGINABLE...

LAS VEGAS.*

*MEPHISTO WAS TRAPPED IN A VEGAS PENTHOUSE IN DOCTOR STRANGE: DAMNATION #4!

WHAT THE HELL, THANOS?!

WHAT HAS MEPHISTO DONE? IS THIS ABOUT HELA'S UPCOMING NUPTIALS? BECAUSE I HAD NOTHING TO--

LEAVE FRANK CASTLE ALONE.

...

WHO?!

YOU HEARD ME, DEVIL.

LEAVE HIM BE. AND IF YOU SHOULD NEED REMINDING, THANOS WILL BE HAPPY TO...

WHAT DID YOU SAY ABOUT HELA?*

*CHECK OUT THOR #4 TO FIND OUT MORE!

CHITAURI PRIME.

AND SO, WITH THIS LAST PETTY (AND ULTIMATELY FRUITLESS) ACTION BEHIND HIM, THANOS SET HIS SIGHTS ONCE AGAIN ON HIS DESTINY.

AND HOW BEST TO MURDER IT.

UPON HIS ARRIVAL TO HIS NATIVE TIMELINE (AND AFTER ASSAULTING THE DEVIL), THANOS BECAME AWARE OF THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE INFINITY STONES.

THIS, HE THOUGHT, WAS HOW HE WOULD DENY HIS FUTURE.

WITH THE GAUNTLET REASSEMBLED, THE MAD TITAN WOULD BREAK THE HANDS OF DESTINY AND RECLAIM HIS FATE.

BUT, AS THANOS WOULD SOON LEARN...

...FROM GODS AND DEMONS TO TITANS AND KINGS...

...FATE MAKES FOOLS OF US ALL.

HE KNEW IT WAS HER THE MOMENT SHE SET FOOT ON CHITAURI PRIME.

HOW COULD HE NOT?

HE KNEW IT THE VERY SECOND HER SWORD DIPPED INTO THE FROZEN SANDS AND KICKED HER SCENT INTO THE ATMOSPHERE.

tch

HE KNEW IT IN THE NEAR-IMPERCEPTIBLE SOUND OF HER FOOTFALLS.

FORGED IN HIS IMAGE, SHE IS THE DEADLIEST WOMAN ALIVE.

SHE IS THE SWORD HE SEES IN THE WORLD.

SHE IS GAMORA.

THE ANSWER, AT LONG LAST, TO A BILLION-YEAR-OLD RIDDLE

WHAT DID THANOS DO TO ERASE HIS FUTURE?

HE DIED.

FUFF

AND SO, HERE, AT THE END OF THE TITAN'S DREADFUL REIGN...

...THE ANSWER TO ANOTHER QUESTION...

...WHAT WILL BE THE LEGACY OF THE MAD TITAN?

THAT ONE IS FAIRLY SIMPLE. AND QUITE OBVIOUS, REALLY.

HIS LEGACY IS, AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN, DEATH.

DEATH AND...

...WELL...

...MOMENTS LATER...

...YOU'LL SEE.

IT'S ABOUT DAMN TIME.

ZZZZP

HE'S ALL YOURS, BOYS.
GRRR

EAT UP.

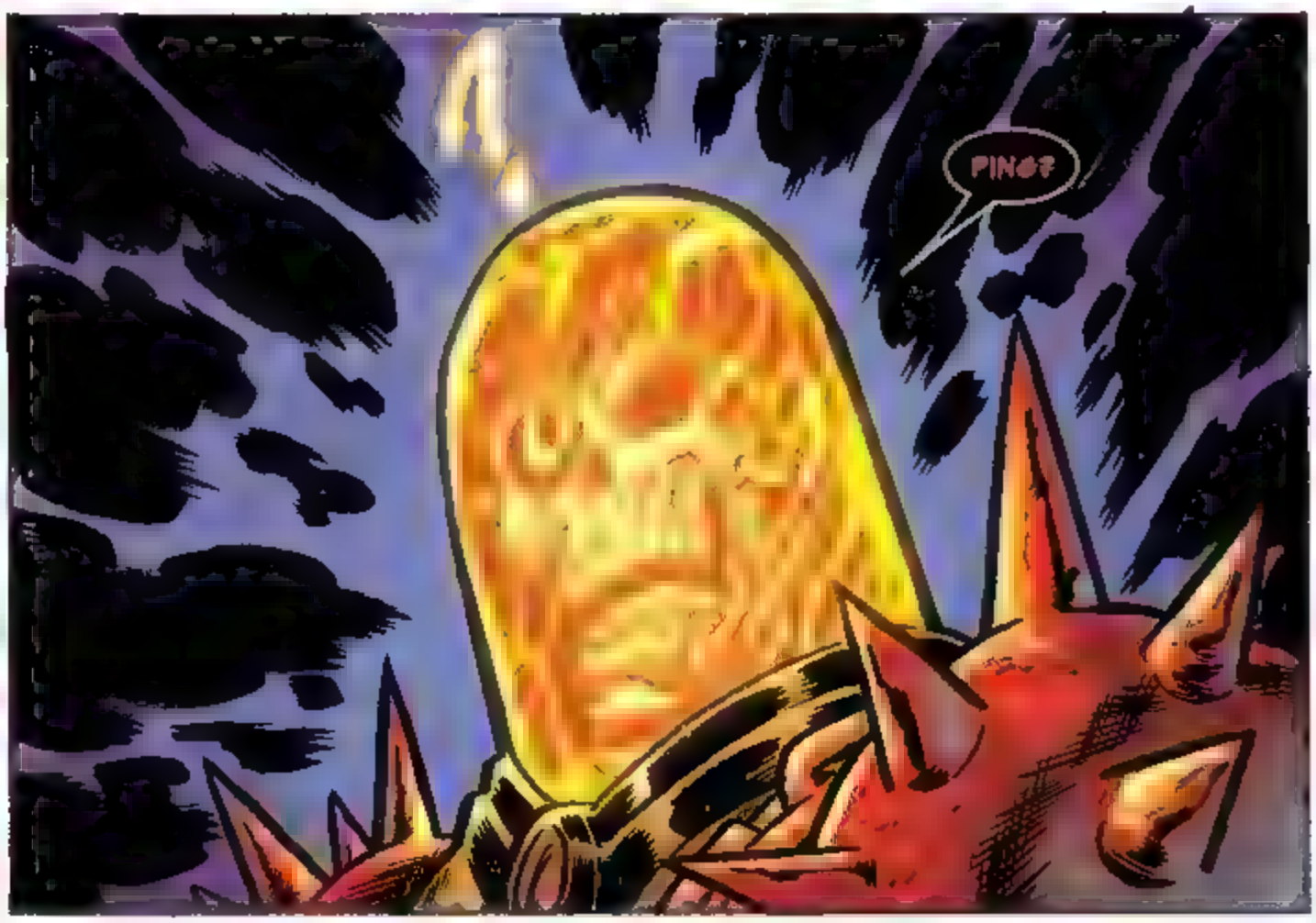
SNARL

CHOMP

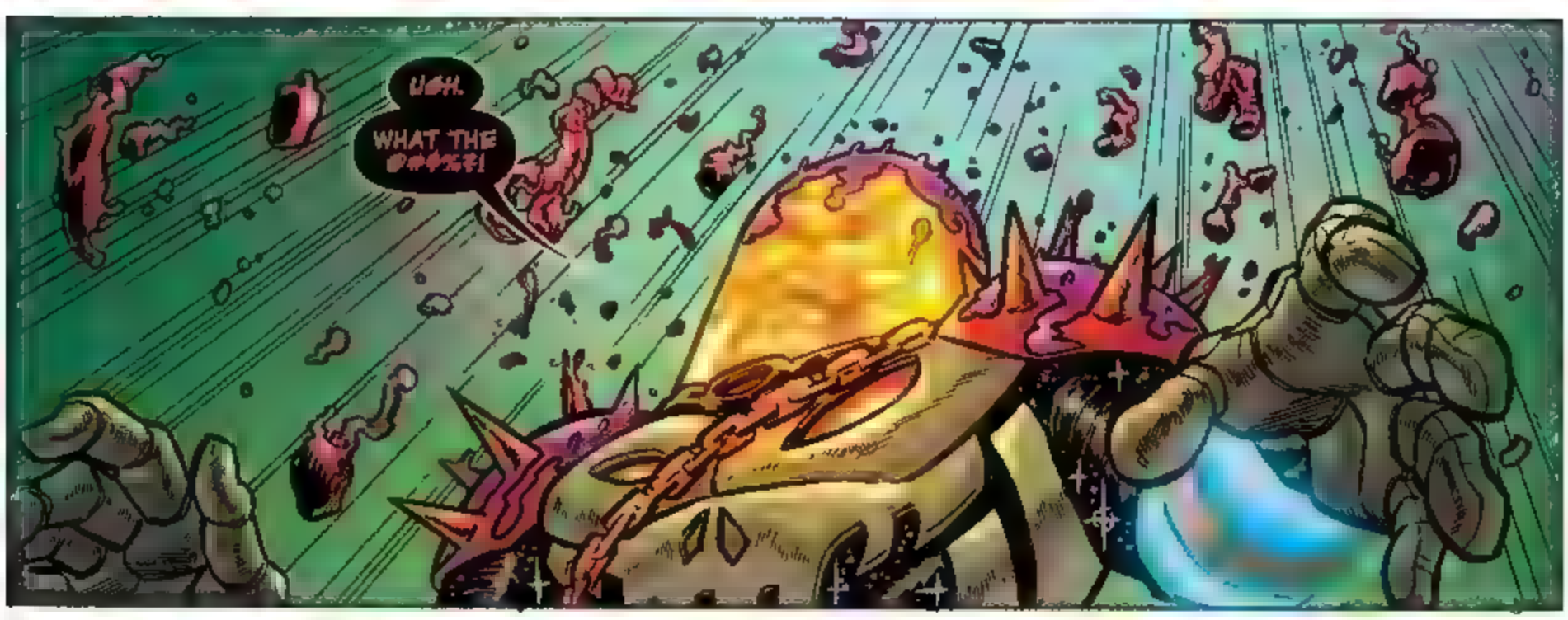
SHRIIP

SLURP

BING


PING?

ZZZRRAK


UGH.
WHAT THE @#%$?!

CAREFUL, RIDER.
HIS BODY IS BOOBY-TRAPPED.

YEAH?
AND HOW THE @#%$ WOULD YOU KNOW THAT?!

BECAUSE HE'S MY BROTHER

NOW MOVE

OH. HEY. YOU'RE EROS.

I'M FRANK. MOST FOLKS CALL ME--

:SIGH:

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, RIDER.

EVERYONE KNOWS WHO YOU ARE

HOW DID YOU KNOW TO BE HERE?

THE SAME WAY YOU DID, I WOULD IMAGINE.

I JUST... FELT IT. I KNEW HE WAS DEAD.

PRECISELY. YOU'RE CONNECTED TO HIM SAME AS I.

WHERE IS HIS HEAD?

GONE WHEN I GOT HERE. MUSTA BEEN TAKEN BY, UH...WHOEVER SET HIM ON FIRE, I RECKON.

RIGHT. WELL, I'LL NEED TO FIND THAT NEXT.

CHUNK

BRUTAL.

HEY, NOT THAT I GIVE A #@#%, BUT WHAT THE @#% ARE YOU DOING?

I'M RETRIEVING SOMETHING BEFORE IT SETS OFF AN ENDGAME THAT WILL BURN THIS UNIVERSE TO THE GROUND.

I'M AFRAID MY LOST BROTHER HAS A WAR WRAPPED AROUND HIS HEART.

WAIT...WHAT DOES...

WHAT COULD BE INSIDE OF THAT OLD DEAD PIECE OF @#% THAT COULD IGNITE A WAR?

HIS WILL.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #1

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 1

SUPER-SPACE:
THE HIDDEN STAR FIELDS OF SECTOR X.

"HELLO. THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE.

"LET ME BEGIN BY SAYING THIS--

"THE GALAXY...

"THE GALAXY IS BROKEN.

"A HUNDRED WORLDS ARE AT WAR.

"THE STARS RUN RED ACROSS THE BLACK AS ANCIENT GODS STIR FROM THEIR SLUMBERS.

"NEVER IN MY TIME HAVE I SEEN SUCH HATRED AND DIVISION AMONG THE VARIOUS HOUSES AND TRIBES OF THE COSMOS...

"NEVER HAVE I SEEN SUCH *UNMITIGATED DEATH.*

THE SANCTUARY

"THE ABYSS IS BURNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...

"AND YET..."

...HERE WE ALL ARE. TOGETHER.

KREE. SKRULL. SHI'AR. ASGARDIANS.

HERALDS. DEMONS. PIRATES. KINGS.

UNITED. FOR TODAY...

TODAY WE BEAR WITNESS TO THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE MAD TITAN.

THANOS.

MY BROTHER.

MANY OF YOU KNOW ME. I AM *EROS.* STARFOX TO SOME.

ALL OF YOU KNOW MY BROTHER. OR...RATHER, YOU "KNEW" HIM.

THANOS IS *DEAD.* IT'S TRUE. EVEN WITHOUT HIS HEAD I EXAMINED HIM SEVERAL TIMES JUST TO BE SURE.

LET US PRAY FOR WHATEVER WORLD HE IS IN NOW.

AND PERHAPS SAVE A PRAYER FOR US AS WELL.

FOR I'M AFRAID I HAVE NOT BROUGHT YOU ALL HERE FOR A CELEBRATION OF A FELLED TITAN.

NO...

THOUGH MY BROTHER IS DEAD...

...HIS REIGN IS NOT...

MMMM.

GREETINGS.

I AM SURE THERE ARE A GREAT NUMBER OF YOU GATHERED HERE TODAY TO CELEBRATE THE PASSING OF YOUR GREATEST FOE.

OH COME ON! GET ON WITH IT, YA' @#$%*&% BLOWHARD!

AYE.

YOU HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE, I AM SURE, THAT YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TOGETHER TO HEAR THE FINAL WORDS OF THANOS.

MY TESTAMENT. MY REQUIEM, AS IT WERE.

THIS IS... UNTRUE.

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND. IF THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN RECOVERED, THEN I HAVE BEEN FELLED.

AND AS HARD AS IT IS FOR ME TO BELIEVE A BEING EXISTS THAT COULD KILL THANOS...

...THANOS PREPARES FOR... EVERYTHING.

THIS IS NOT HOW THANOS WILL DIE.

NO, WHEN I JOIN DEATH AT HER SIDE, IT WILL BE ON TERMS THAT I ALONE WILL DICTATE.

I HAVE NEVER LIVED A COMMON LIFE, AND I WILL NOT DIE A COMMON DEATH.

AS SUCH, I HAVE TAKEN MEASURES TO HAVE MY CONSCIOUSNESS UPLOADED AND IMPLANTED INTO THE MIND OF ANOTHER UPON MY UNTIMELY DEMISE

NO...

GOOD GOD...IS--- IS THAT POSSIBLE?

THAT I WILL BE UNABLE TO WITNESS YOUR SCRAMBLING HORROR TO FIND MY NEW BODY...

...TO NOT BE THERE TO SEE YOU RIP ONE ANOTHER APART TO PREVENT MY FINAL GAUNTLET...

...THIS...IS MY ONLY REGRET.

GOOD LUCK.

SO...

...YOU CAN SEE NOW WHY I HAVE CALLED YOU ALL HERE.

ALL ASSEMBLED, YOU ARE THE GREATEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL POWERS THAT EXIST IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

YOU WILL NOTICE THE INTENTIONAL LACK OF "EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES" AS WELL.

THIS IS BECAUSE, WELL... YOU ARE, ALL OF YOU...HOW DO I SAY THIS...

...NOT ADVERSE TO UNCLEAN HANDS.

I'M AFRAID WHAT COMES NEXT WILL BE RATHER DIFFICULT. CHOICES WILL NEED TO BE MADE THAT--

WHAT ABOUT THE *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*?

WHERE ARE THEY?

HALFWAY TO KNOWHERE...

SKRCH

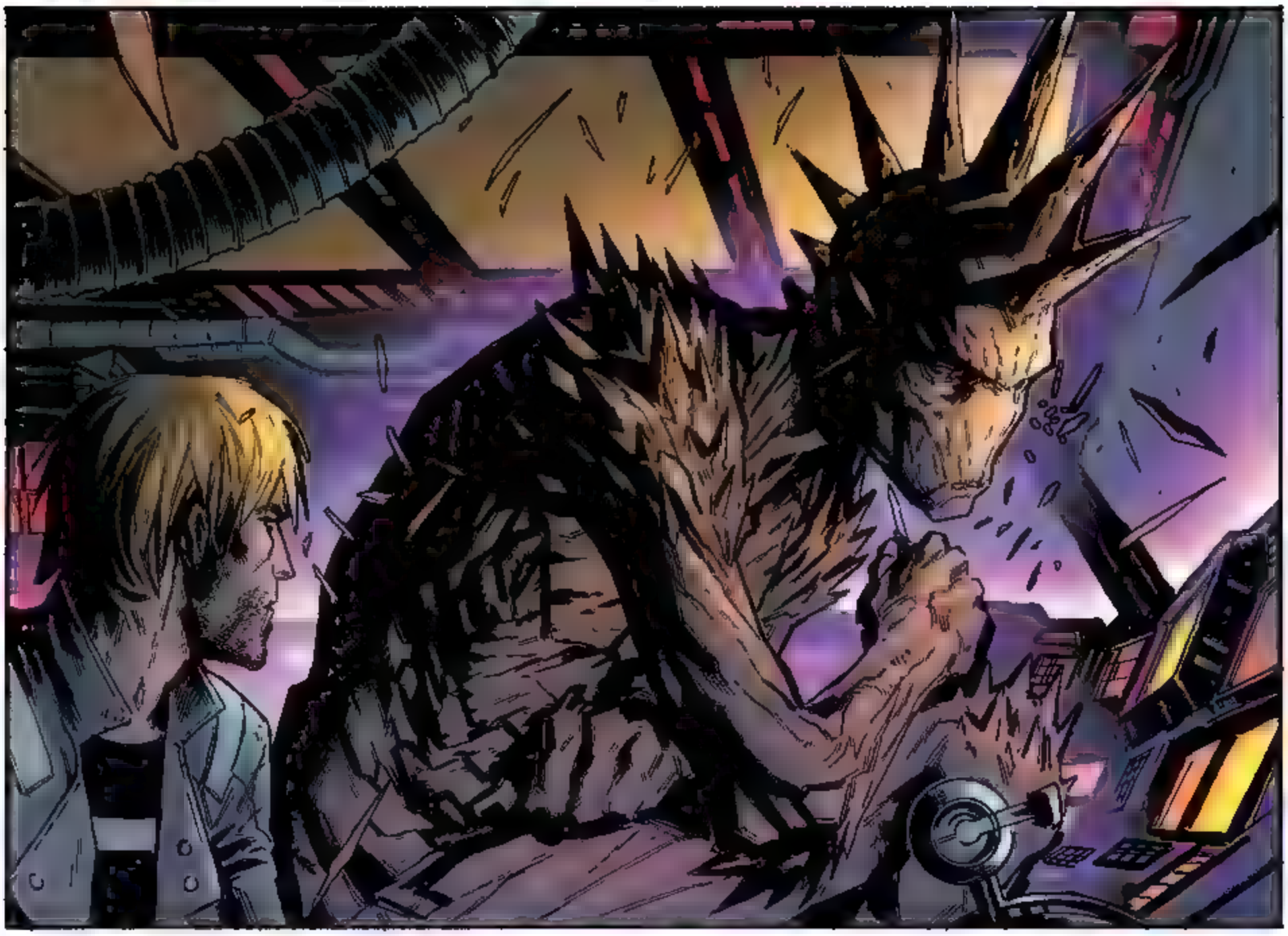
SKRCH

SKRCH

DAMMIT, GROOT...

SKRCH

FOR THE LAST DAMN TIME, WILL YOU KNOCK IT OFF WITH THE SAWDUST ALREADY?!



@#$% YOU.
SHOT

YEAH, WELL "I AM GROOT" YOURSELF TOO, PAL.

KNOWHERE, THIS IS CAPTAIN PETER QUILL OF THE RYDER, REQUESTING A DOCK, A STRONG DRINK AND A PLACE TO SLEEP THAT DRINK OFF. DO YOU COPY?
...
KNOWHERE, DO YOU COPY?

KNOWHERE? COME IN, DO YOU READ—
QUILL, SHUT UP.
LOOK.

KNOWHERE...

IT'S... GONE.

I'M AFRAID WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO KILL QUITE A LOT OF PEOPLE.

THIS IS MADNESS! WE HAVE NO IDEA IF THANOS IS EVEN TELLING THE TRUTH! THIS COULD ALL BE PART OF SOME MAD GAME!

IT COULD. OR WE COULD BE IGNORING THE BIRTH OF A NEW THANOS. WE WOULD BE FOOLS TO NOT HEAR EROS OUT, BILL.

THE SILVER SURFER IS RIGHT. IMAGINE, IF WE'D HAD THE CAPACITY TO END THANOS' LIFE AS A CHILD, HOW MUCH PAIN AND MISERY WOULD THIS UNIVERSE HAVE BEEN SPARED?

UGH.

I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE SHOT THAT DAMN BABY IN THE FACE.

I'VE NARROWED THE LIST DOWN TO A GROUP OF HIGHLY LIKELY CANDIDATES ACCORDING TO POWER, INTELLIGENCE AND INFLUENCE.

LIKE IT OR NOT, IF THERE IS EVEN THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE THAT MY BROTHER COULD BE REBORN INTO ANY ONE OF THESE BODIES, WE HAVE TO END THEM.

I STILL MAY BE ABLE TO GLEAN SOME MORE INFORMATION FROM FURTHER DISSECTION OF THANOS' BODY.

IF IT WERE UP TO ME WE WOULD THROW HIS CORPSE INTO THE SUN.

BUT FOR NOW...

...I'M AFRAID WE MUST START WITH THE MOST OBVIOUS CANDIDATE.

BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE...

...GAMORA MUST DIE.

I KNEW IT! I WANTED TO KILL THAT LUNATIC THE FIRST CHANCE I HAD WHEN MOONDRAGON AND I ARRIVED IN THIS INSANE UNIVERSE!

PHYLA...NO. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

HEATHER, EROS IS RIGHT. LOOK AT WHAT GAMORA DID WITH THE INFINITY STONES.* SHE'S OBVIOUSLY—

SO, WE'RE HUNTING PEOPLE DOWN BECAUSE OF THE ACTIONS OF THEIR PARENTS?

HEATHER...

I MEAN, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE. WE'RE JUST GOING TO TAKE THANOS' WORD?! DOES THAT SOUND SANE?

*SEE *INFINITY WARS #1-6!* —DS

KID'S GOT A POINT. HELL, YOU START WALKING DOWN THAT PATH THEN HE COULD BE ANY ONE OF US IN THIS ROOM, RIGHT?

I MEAN, *THANOS* COMING TO HIS OWN FUNERAL TO WATCH FOLKS FIGHT OVER HIM WOULDN'T BE THE *CRAZIEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN.*

BY THE GODS...

LOOK!

BUILDING

HUH.

BUT THAT MIGHT BE.

BOOM

VWAAA...

"THAT'S KNOWHERE OUT THERE

O.K.

"WHICH MEANS WE'VE JUST BEEN BLASTED AND TORN IN HALF BY A SEVERED CELESTIAL HEAD CAPABLE OF FASTER-THAN-LIGHT-TRAVEL

"THOSE CABLES COMING OUT OF ITS MOUTH ARE UNBREAKABLE KORBINITE STEEL. THEY COULD SURVIVE THE HEAT DEATH OF A NEUTRON STAR

"WE AREN'T GOING ANYWHERE UNLESS KNOWHERE WANTS US TO.

"IT ALSO MEANS WE'RE BEING BOARDED..."

VWAA. CHK-CHK-CHK-CHK

...SO, ON YOUR FEET, EVERYONE. THAT'S AN *OUTRIDER HORDE* OUT THERE.

WHICH ONLY MEANS ONE THING.

I BELIEVE THIS IS A ROBBERY.

HSSSSS!

HSSSSS!

BILL, I'LL NEED YOU FLANKED ON MY LEFT DURING THIS. NO ONE GETS TO THANOS' BODY, UNDERSTOOD?

OF COURSE, NORRIN. IT WILL BE AN HONOR.

AND...I DON'T BELIEVE WE'VE MET. I'LL NEED YOU TO--

FRANK CASTLE. YOU KILLED ME IN THE FUTURE.

WE'RE GOOD, BUT MAYBE DON'T GIVE ME ORDERS, RADD.

VERY WELL.

@#$%! GUYS!

HEADS UP.

THE BLACK ORDER IS HERE!

OF COURSE. THE TITAN'S GENERALS.

THIS WILL BE A FINE END.

WITH THAT ATTITUDE IT WILL BE.

AGHHH!!!

RIGHT. OKAY. AND WHERE DID YOU LAST SEE IT?

KNOWHERE? *UM*...HERE? IN THIS SPACE WHERE A GIANT CELESTIAL HEAD FOR A CITY CLEARLY USED TO BE? WHAT ARE YOU, NEW?

UH-HUH. YOU BEEN DRINKING TODAY, SIR?

NOPE. AND IT'S NOT "SIR." IT'S CAPTAIN. CAPTAIN PETER QUI--

NOT REALLY. NO.

OH, NO WAY. ***STAR-LORD,*** RIGHT?

YOU STILL WITH THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY? WHERE'S YOUR CREW?

DRAX IS DEAD. GAMORA IS A VILLAIN, I GUESS. I DON'T KNOW. THIS IS GROOT.

'SUP.

WHAT ABOUT THE LITTLE GUY? ***ROCKET RACCOON?***

OH. WE...*UH*...

WE DON'T TALK ABOUT ROCKET.

CRAZY. YOUR SHIP STILL THE *MILANO*?

THE *MILANO* IS GONE. NEW SHIP IS REGISTERED AS THE *RYDER*.

HUH. AFTER RICHARD?

WINONA.

WHAT?

WHAT ARE WE DOING RIGHT NOW? WHERE THE HELL IS KNOWHERE? WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING ABOUT TH—

DEET DEET

HOLD PLEASE.

WHAT?

HUH.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE ON TO SOMETHING, QUILL.

NOVA CORPS PICKED UP SOME ENERGY READINGS A FEW LIGHT-YEARS OUTSIDE OF MARKUS-CENTAURI THAT ARE READING AS CELESTIAL. AND MOVING FAST.

LOOKING LIKE IT'S HEADING TOWARD THAT BIG MEETING THAT'S HAPPENING OUT ON THANOS' SHIP THAT WE'RE ALL SUPPOSED TO PRETEND ISN'T HAPPENING.

WAIT. WHAT? THANOS? MEETING?

OH YEAH, WE GOT INVITED TO THAT.

GROOT MEANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT BUT THEN GROOT DIDN'T.

SEEMED LAME.

WHAT?! GROOT, WHAT THE HELL?

DAMMIT, MAN! WELL, COME ON, WE HAVE TO—

THAT'S A NEGATIVE, CITIZEN.

THE NOVA CORPS HAS THIS UNDER CONTROL.

I'M SURE IT'S FINE.

AHHH!

FIRE!

NO! YOU WILL NOT TAKE THAN--

EVERYONE, GET READY!

VVVVAARRP

BWWW

PACKAGE SECURED.

LET'S BE DONE WITH THIS. PREPARING FOR JUMP.

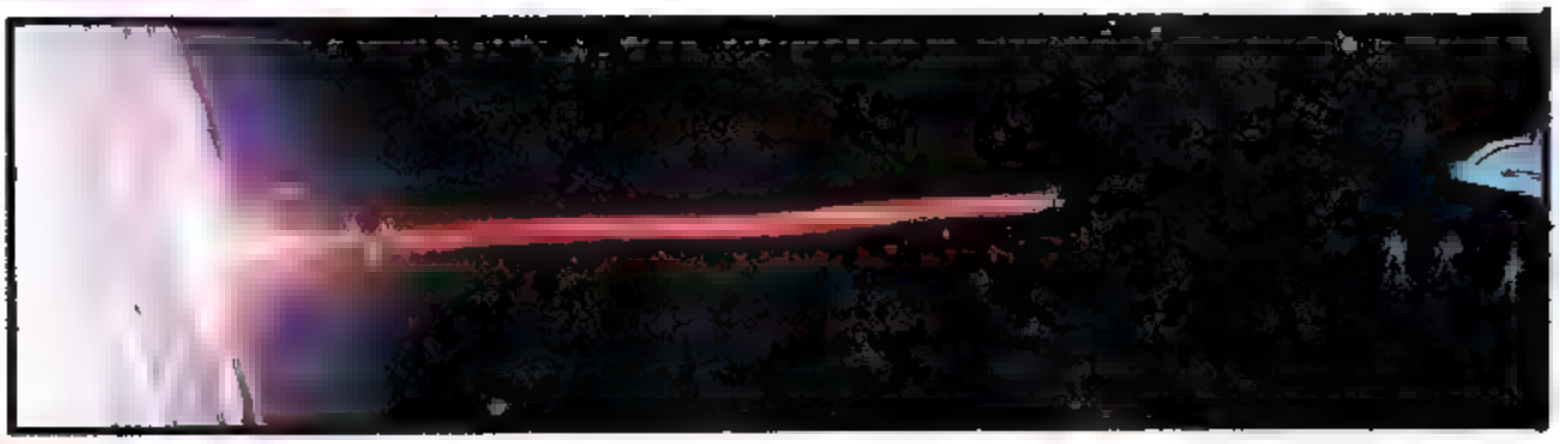
HEATHER!!!

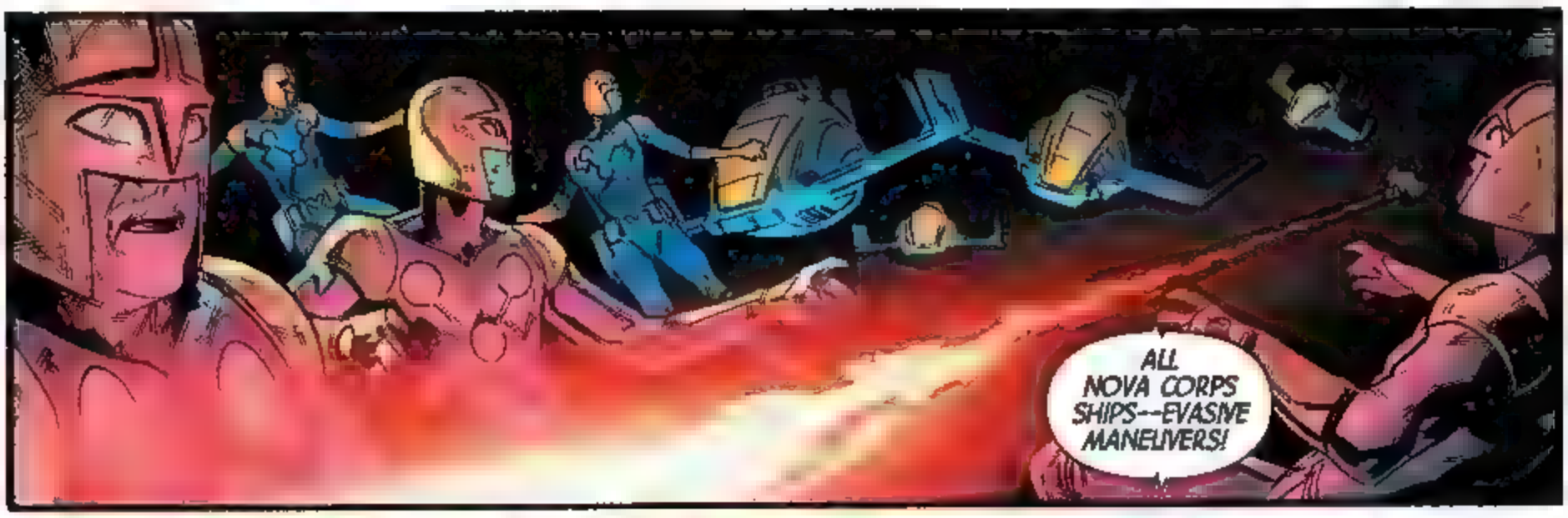
NO!!!

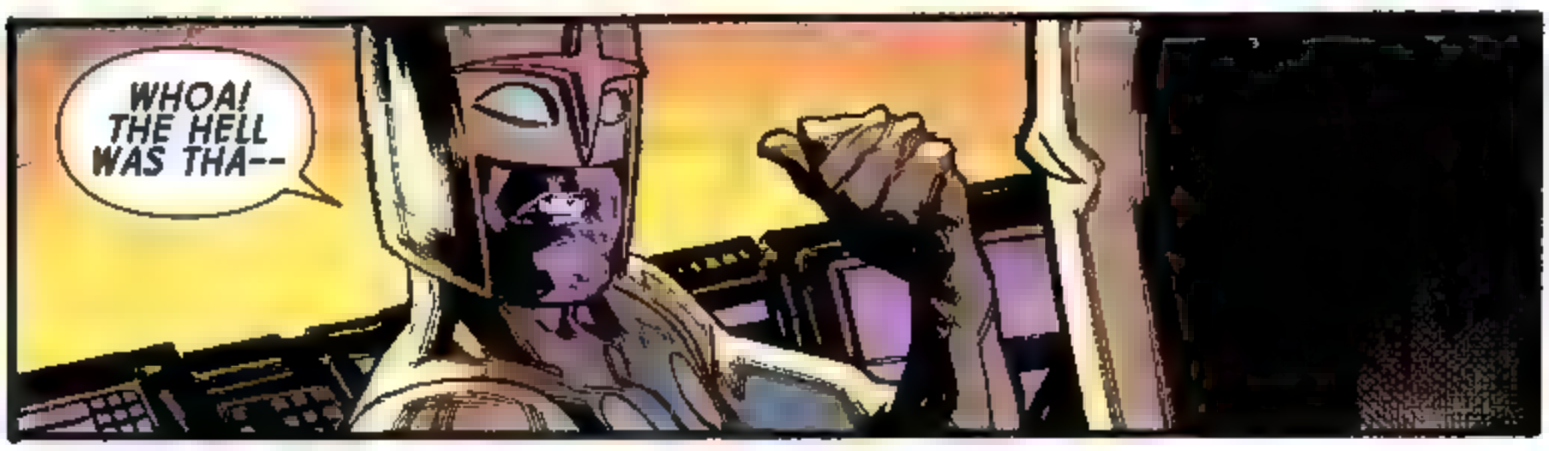
WWWWAAA-

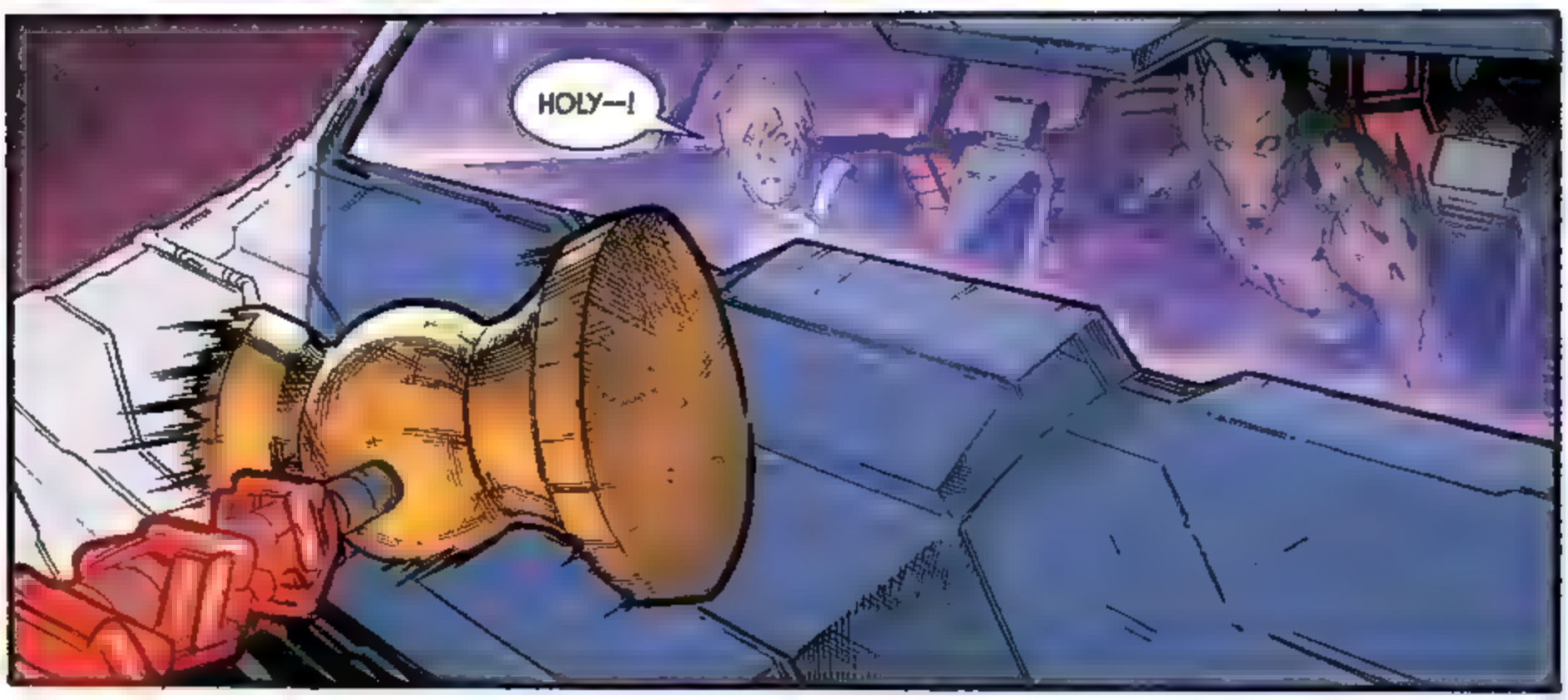
VWAAA

VWAAA-
RAM!




ALL NOVA CORPS SHIPS--EVASIVE MANEUVERS!


WHOA! THE HELL WAS THA--


HOLY--!

@#$%! I AM GROOT!

CRASH

GHH!

CHUNK

CLOCK IN AND GRAB THAT CHAIN, GROOT!

I THINK WE JUST FELL INTO A RESCUE MISSION.

COME ON!!!

AGHHH!!!

GOOD LORD, IS THAT BETA RAY BILL?! HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?!

LOOK! HE HAS SOMEONE ELSE!

IS THAT...THAT'S MOONDRAGON AND PHYLA-VELL AND--AND SOME WEIRD DEMON GUY!

LET'S REEL 'EM IN!

BILL, ARE YOU GUYS—

WE'VE LOST THEM.

CORSAIR AND THE STARJAMMERS. THE SILVER SURFER. THE IMPERIAL GUARD, THE SKRULLS....

GONE.

THE BLACK ORDER HAS THANOS' BODY. I'VE...

I'VE FAILED.

SLOW DOWN, WHAT DOES--

THAT'S ENOUGH, QUILL.

I'M AFRAID YOU'LL NEED TO RELINQUISH THEM TO US.

WE HAVE SOME QUESTIONS.

SORRY, NO CAN DO. CHECK YOUR FILES AGAIN, PIG.

YOU'RE GONNA NEED A WARRANT TO ENTER MY SHIP.

YOUR GALACTIC RIGHTS ONLY EXTEND TO MEMBERS OF YOUR IMMEDIATE CREW, QUILL. AND EVEN THEN, ONLY TENTATIVELY...

OH. UM...

THEN, YEAH...

THEY'RE WITH ME.

THIS IS MY NEW CREW.

WAIT, NO.

NO, NO, NO. I AINT SIGNING UP TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DAMN—

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

MEANWHILE...

THE BLACH ORDEA.

WE WERE SUCCESSFUL.

THANOS IS YOURS AGAIN.

AND THE OTHERS? HIS BROTHER?

DEAD. THEIR BODIES SCATTERED ACROSS TIME.

mmm.

WHERE IS HIS HEAD?

IT WAS NOT ON THE SHIP.

THEN GO GET IT!

HE MUST BE COMPLETE IF WE ARE TO RESURRECT HIM!

FORGIVE ME, BUT THANOS IS TOGETHER WITH HIS GREATEST LOVE NOW.

TO RIP HIM AWAY FROM HER...

...WOULD BE TO WAGE WAR AGAINST DEATH ITSELF.

NO ONE CAN DEFY HER WILL.

NOT EVEN YOU...

...NOT EVEN *HELA.*

GODDESS OF DEATH.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #2

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 2

SO YEAH. THANOS IS DEAD.

AND APPARENTLY HE LEFT A WILL AND EVERYONE WHO'S ANYONE SHOWED UP TO HEAR IT. EVERYONE EXCEPT ME AND GROOT. WHICH IS ANNOYING, BUT...Y'KNOW..

WHATEVER.

ANYWAY, IN HIS WILL, I GUESS THANOS SAID HE WAS GOING TO UPLOAD HIS CONSCIOUSNESS INTO A NEW PERSON? SO EVERYONE IS FREAKING OUT.

'CAUSE...Y'KNOW... EVERYONE ASSUMES IT'S...HER.

GAMORA.

THEY WERE GOING TO TRY TO KILL HER. STARFOX AND HIS LITTLE *GAMORA KILL CREW.*

BEFORE *THEY* GOT KILLED BY THE BLACK ORDER. OR WAIT, DID THEY DIE IN THE ATTACK? HAVE TO ASK BETA RAY BILL ABOUT THAT TIMELINE.

OH YEAH, THE BLACK ORDER STOLE THANOS' BODY AND BLEW EVERYONE INTO A BLACK HOLE.

AND BETA RAY BILL IS ON THE TEAM NOW

OH, AND I HAVE A NEW TEAM. KIND OF.

NO ONE SEEMS TO BE VERY EXCITED ABOUT IT.

ANYWAY, I'M RAMBLING. HOW ARE YOU, KITTY?

PETER...IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING.

AND YOU LOOK LIKE @#$%.

I KNOW YOU'RE IN SPACE SO SHOWERS AND TIME ARE HARD BUT--

YOU'RE IN SPACE TOO. EARTH IS IN SPACE. *EVERYTHING* IS IN SPACE, KITTY.

*THIS SCENE TAKES PLACE BEFORE X-MEN DISASSEMBLED! --DS

YOU GET DUMB AND PHILOSOPHICAL WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK.

YOU'RE DRUNK.

UGH. WHY AM I ON A VIDEO LINE ANYWAY? DID YOU NOT PAY YOUR... HOLOGRAM... BILL?

ALL-NEW, ALL-TERRIBLE SHIP. THE *RYDER*.

AFTER [redacted]?

I LOVE YOU, COME BACK.

PETER.

COME ON, I'M KIDDING. I KNOW I MISSED MY CHANCE. I GOT THE WEDDING INVITE.

HEY, MAZEL TOV, BY THE WAY. COLOSSUS IS A GOOD GUY.

...HE IS.

PETER. WHY ARE YOU CALLING ME?

OH. *UM*, I DON'T KNOW. NEEDED SOMEONE TO TALK TO WHO WASN'T A TREE OR A HORSE OR A DEMON OR A BUNCH OF COPS, I GUESS?

NO, I MEAN WHY ARE YOU CALLING ME AND NOT HER?

WHAT? HER?

DON'T DO THAT.

WHAT? SHE KILLED ME, KITTY. YOU DON'T JUST GET OVER BEING DEAD.

GOD, YOU WOULD HATE THE X-MEN.

LISTEN, NOT THAT YOU ASKED, BUT I KNOW YOU. I KNOW YOU CAN'T SIT BACK AND LET BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT.

SO, IF THERE'S A CHANCE SHE COULD BE IN TROUBLE, YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS INSTEAD OF JUST MOPING AND DRINKING.

ALSO, ARE WE JUST NOT GOING TO TALK ABOUT THE BLACK ORDER THING? THAT FEELS SUPER IMPORTANT...

*I MEAN, WHAT THE HELL? WHERE DID THEY TAKE THANOS' BODY? AND **WHY** DID THEY TAKE HIS BODY?!*

MEH.

I DUNNO.

BUNCHA CREEPS. I'M SURE IT'S FINE.

WHERE IS THANOS' HEAD?!

GAH!!!

KRASH

OH... →COUGH← IS...IS THANOS DEAD?

HOW... HOW SAD YOU ALL MUST—

ENOUGH, COLLECTOR.

KRAK

AH!

I'M SORRY, DEAR. IT'S JUST THAT I'M HAVING A HARD TIME REMEMBERING WHAT I'VE SOLD AND TO WHOM...

PERHAPS IF I WASN'T BURDENED BY MY SUDDEN LOSS OF FORTUNE I COULD THINK CLEARER...

SO. A TRADE THEN. VERY WELL...

...LET'S MAKE A DEAL, TIVAN.

H-HELA?

I HEARD YOU RECENTLY REGAINED CONTROL OF HEL.* CONGRATULATIONS.

I SEE YOU ARE STILL QUITE HUNG UP ON YOUR OLD FLINGS. PERHAPS IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON FROM--

YOU SPEAK LIKE SOMEONE WITH A DEATH WISH...

*SEE THOR (2018) #41 —DS

BUT THIS IS FAR FROM YOUR FIRST BRUSH WITH DEATH, ISN'T IT, TIVAN?

AFTER ALL, YOU'VE BEEN TOUCHED BY MISTRESS DEATH HERSELF. HAVE YOU NOT? GRANTED... IMMORTALITY?

YOU BOYS AND YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO THAT PATHETIC WOMAN. I WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND IT.

NEVERTHELESS, HERE IS MY OFFER TO YOU...

YOU TELL ME WHERE THANOS' HEAD IS.

AND I DON'T SHOW YOU HOW EASY IT IS TO BREAK DEATH'S DEALS...

RIGHT, THEN.

THE GOOD NEWS IS, I HEAR THE *NEGATIVE ZONE* IS QUITE LOVELY THIS TIME OF YEAR...

SHHH...

IT'S OKAY. I'M HERE. YOU'RE SAFE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CODDLE ME. IT WAS JUST A NIGHTMARE.

HEATHER, IT WOULD BE A NIGHTMARE IF YOU WERE ASLEEP. YOU HAVEN'T SLEPT IN DAYS.

I JUST... WE FELL INTO A BLACK HOLE, YELL.

BUT... THEY DIDN'T.

AND WE GOT OUT.

BUT WE DID.

...

HAVE I TOLD YOU THAT I—

I LOVE YOU TOO.

KNOCK KNOCK...

HEY, I'M SORRY. I DON'T MEAN TO BOTHER YOU.

JUST WANTED TO STOP BY AND MAKE SURE YOU GUYS HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED.

I BROUGHT SOME...STUFF OVER. I DON'T KNOW. WE DON'T HAVE MUCH IN THE WAY OF NICE STUFF, BUT I FIGURED YOU GUYS WOULD WANT SOMETHING TO CHANGE INTO AT LEAST...

IT'S MOSTLY GAMORA'S AND DRAX'S STUFF. SO I DON'T KNOW SIZES OR THAT KINDA THING.

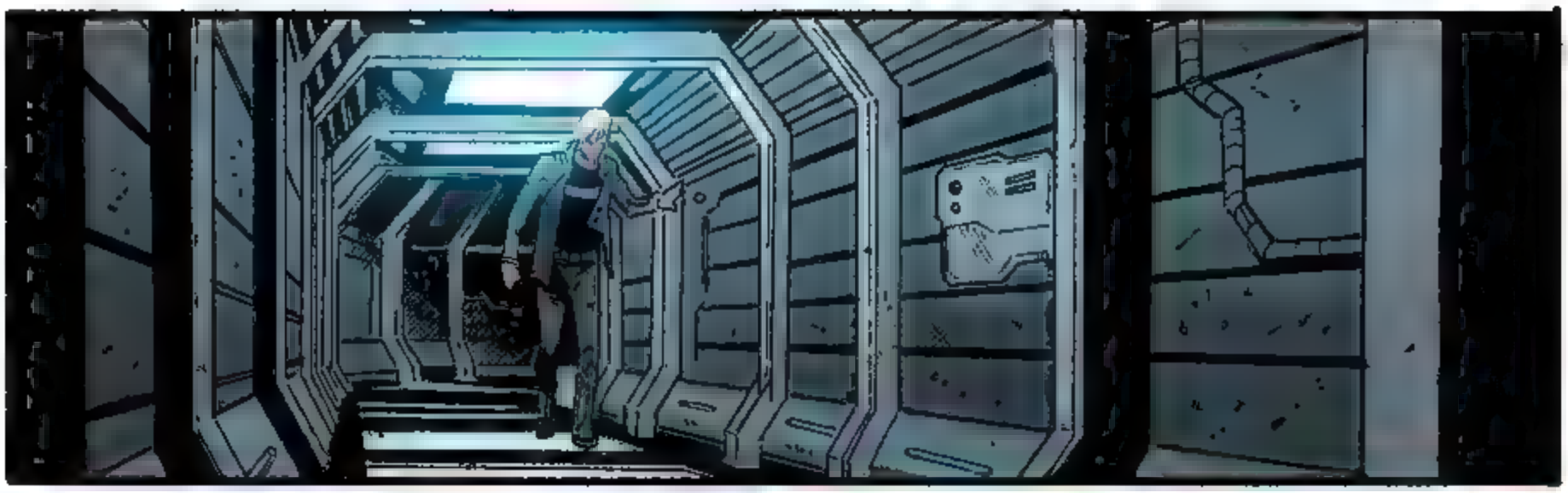
ANYWAY, SORRY TO BUG YOU. HAVE A GOOD--

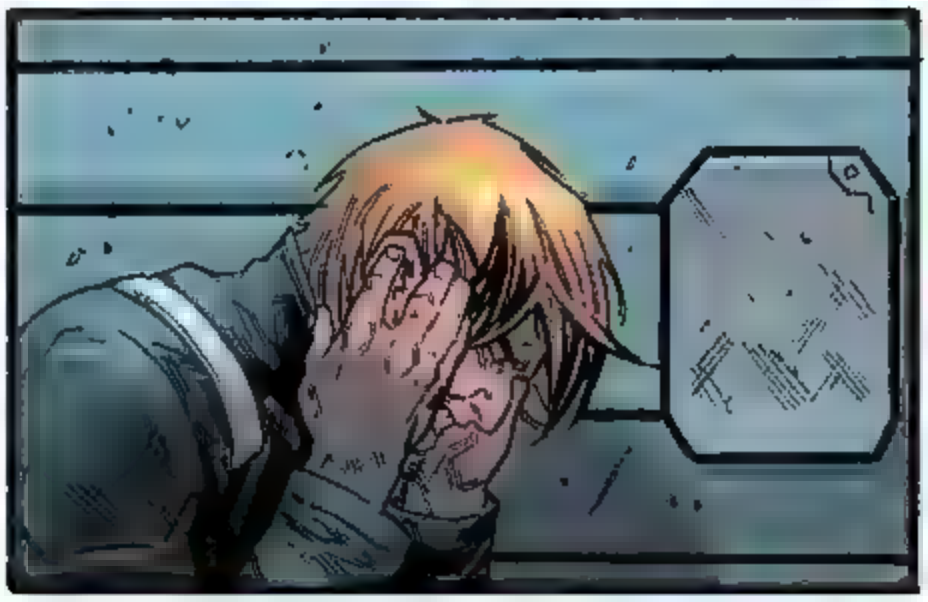
PETER...

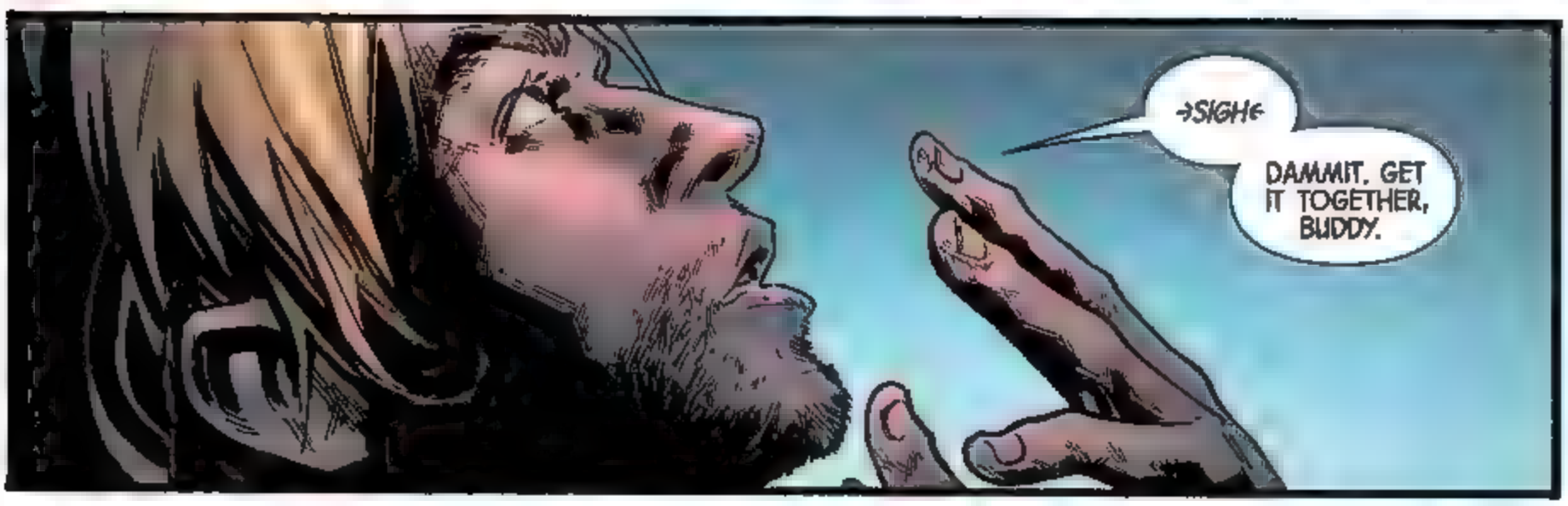
ARE YOU OKAY? YOU LOOK LIKE @#!$.

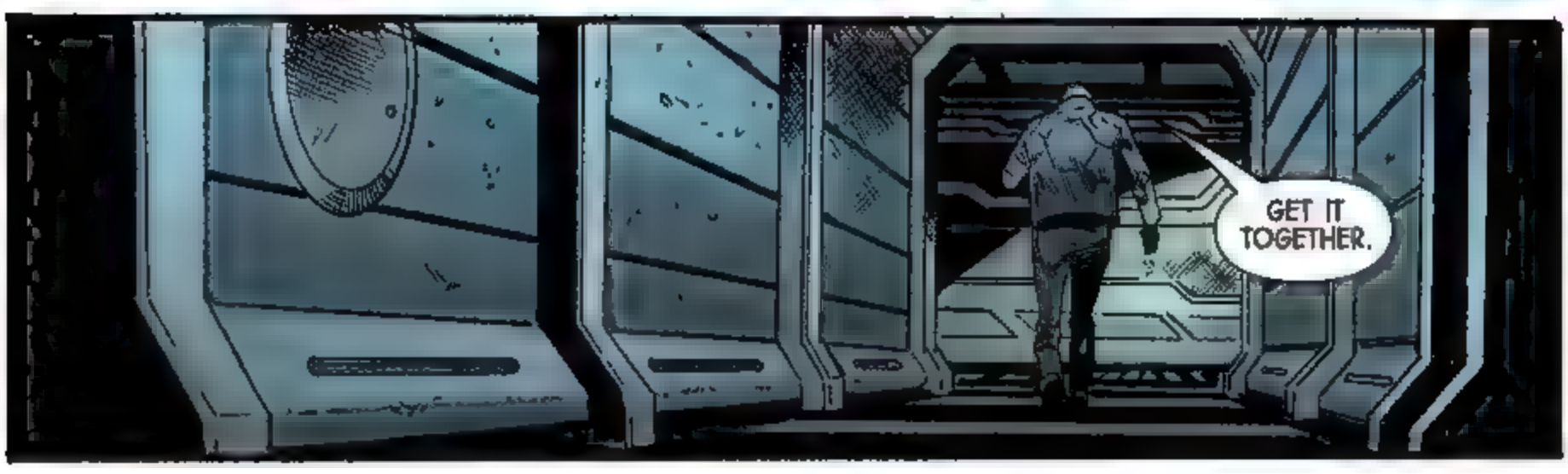
YEAH.

YEAH, I'M GOOD. NIGHT, YOU GUYS.






→SIGH←
DAMMIT. GET IT TOGETHER, BUDDY.


GET IT TOGETHER.

I KILL YOU, YA DAMN SHRUB!

RAGHH!

THAT IS ENOUGH!

COME ON...

GUYS! WHATEVER THE HELL THIS IS ABOUT, CAN WE PLEASE TABLE IT FOR TONIGHT? I'M SO DRUNK AND I NEED TO SLEE--

AGH! WHAT THE HELL?!

GET 'EM OFF ME, DAMMIT!

#@%$ YOU, CASTLE! YOU ARE NOT LEAVING HERE!

THIS IS ABSURD!

I AM STAB!

I AM STAB!

I AM STAB!

I AM STAB!

I AM STAB!

HEY!

WHAT THE... I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START WITH THIS... GROOT, WHY ARE THERE SO MANY--

I AM STAB!

OW!

AH! DAMMIT!

HEY, COME ON.

WHAT THE HELL, MAN?

THIS @#$%& CUT PIECES OF GROOT OFF AND THEY GREW INTO THESE LITTLE STABBY THINGS!

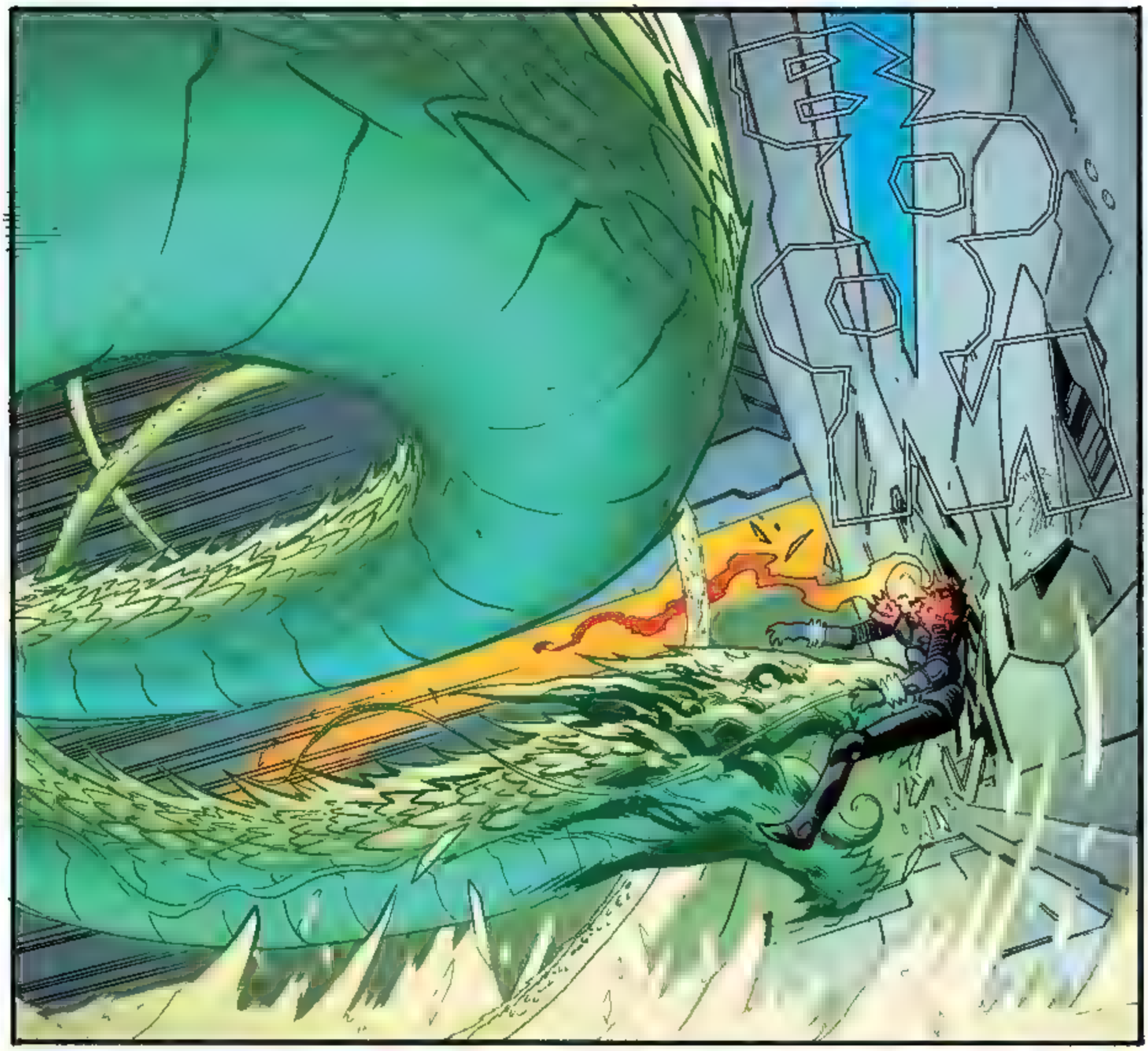
GROOT CAN'T HELP WHO GROOT IS, PETER!

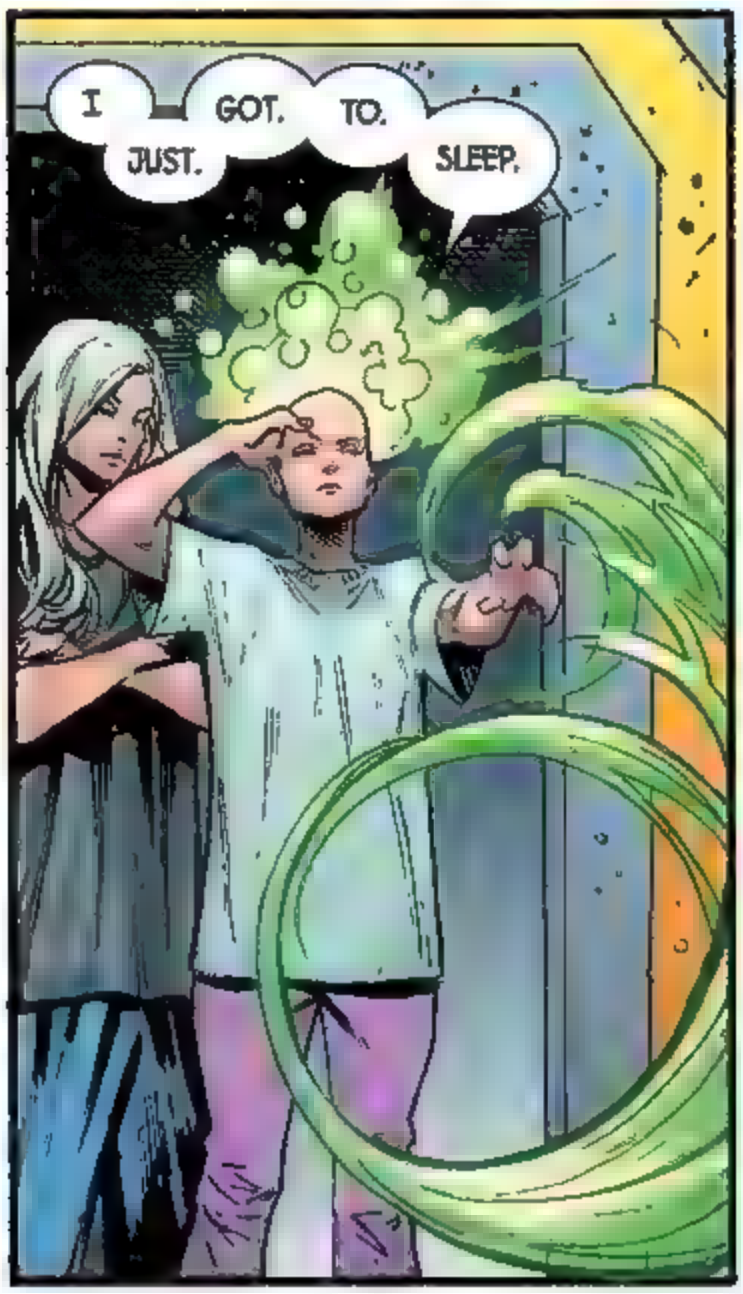
UGH, WHY ARE YOU LIKE THIS NOW?

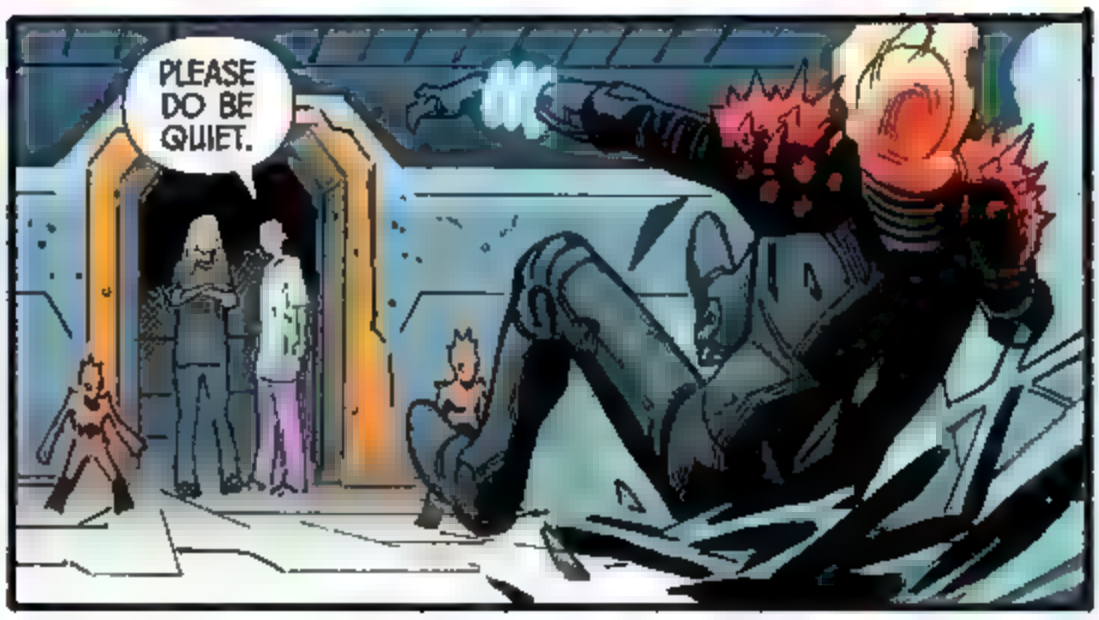
THAT'S RIGHT, SWAMP THANG! YOU BETTER BE GLAD YOUR HORSE FRIEND IS HERE TO HOLD ME BACK!

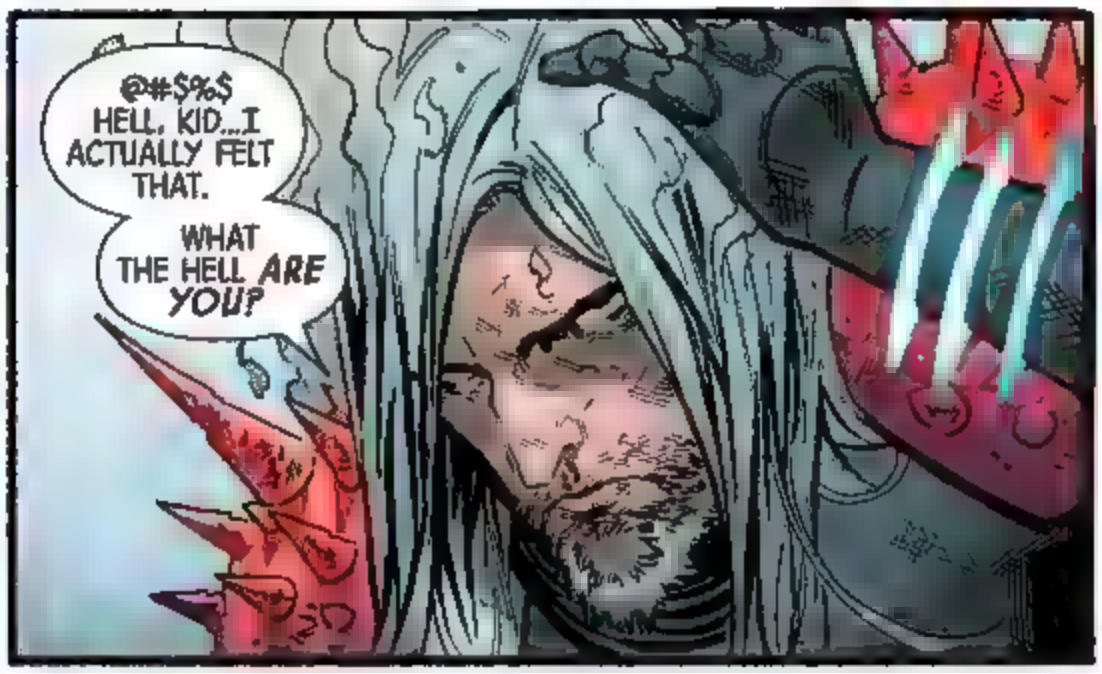
I KILLED THANOS ONCE, KID! I WON'T HESITATE TO MULCH YOUR ASS AND--

THAT'S ENOUGH!




I JUST. GOT. TO. SLEEP.


PLEASE DO BE QUIET.


@#$%$ HELL, KID...I ACTUALLY FELT THAT.
WHAT THE HELL *ARE* YOU?

YOU. WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM? SIDENOTE, WHO THE HELL ARE *YOU?*

FRANK CASTLE. GHOST RIDER. HERALD OF GALACTUS. IT'S A WHOLE...ALTERNATE-FUTURE THING.

...

YEAH, THAT TRACKS. I DON'T LIKE *ANY* OF THOSE THINGS.

AND MY "PROBLEM" IS THAT YOUR CHIA PET SEEMS TO THINK WE'RE ON TEAM "SAVE GAMORA."

AND I'M NOT TOO KEEN ON HAVING ANOTHER THANOS RUNNING AROUND, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

WE HAVE TO SAVE HER.

AYE, GAMORA IS A WAYWARD WARRIOR, BUT SHE DESERVES OUR FORGIVENESS UNTIL SHE PROVES HERSELF UNWORTHY OF IT.

WHO AMONGST US HAS NOT STRAYED FROM THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNE--

@#%$ YOU, RED SKULL!

→SIGH←

"WE" AREN'T ON ANY SIDE!

YOU WANT TO GO HUNT HER DOWN, CASTLE? BE MY GUEST.

BILL, YOU AND GROOT WANT TO GO SAVE HER? YOU KNOW WHERE THE DOOR IS.

JUST FOR THE FLARKIN' LOVE OF GOD, PLEASE DO WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING TO DO *QUIETLY.*

ALL RIGHT THEN, LOSERS. YOU HEARD THE MAN. I'M OUT.

PRAY WE DO NOT MEET AGAIN ON THE BATTLEFIELD. I ASSURE YOU, BETA RAY BILL IS NOT AS EASILY QUELLED AS--

BLAH BLAH BLAH. GO POLISH YOUR HAMMER, DONKEY.

MMMM...

UNTIL THEN, HERALD.

PETER, WAIT...

SLEEP, GROOT. REPORTEDLY IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING IN CERTAIN PARTS OF THE GALAXY.

THE DEMON IS GOING TO GO AFTER HER. HE'S GOING TO FIND HER AND HE'S GOING TO KILL HER FOR SOMETHING SHE HASN'T EVEN DONE.

HE'S NOT. YOU AND I ARE THE ONLY PEOPLE IN THE COSMOS WHO KNOW WHERE SHE IS, AND NO ONE WOULD EVER LOOK FOR HER THERE.

BESIDES...

...YOU CAN'T KILL SOMEONE WHO'S ALREADY DEAD.

GO TO BED, GROOT.

LATER...
ROYAL SHI'AR DESTROYER.
PROTECTED TERRITORY.

IN THE FUTURE, IF YOU ARE TO CALL A MEETING ABOARD MY SHIP, YOU WOULD DO WELL TO ASK PERMISSION.

MY PEOPLE FISHED YOU FROM THE ABYSS, BUT YOU ARE NOT ABOVE SHI'AR LAW AND CUSTOM...

...NO MATTER WHO YOUR BROTHER WAS, EROS.

MY APOLOGIES, GLADIATOR. I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE RESCUE...

...SUCH AS IT IS.

NOW. I HAVE BROUGHT YOU ALL HERE TO CONTINUE OUR MISSION.

THE MISSION EXPANDS BUT DOES NOT CHANGE.

THANOS *WILL* BE RESURRECTED.

WE MUST NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN.

THIS WILL NOT BE EASY, BUT WE WILL SAVE THIS UNIVERSE...

...WE WILL GUARD THIS GALAXY.

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

NOW, TO BUSINESS.

WE MUST BEGIN WITH THE MOST OBVIOUS OF CANDIDATES FOR THANOS' RESURRECTION...

YOU SPEAK OF RESURRECTION. BUT YOU DO NOT SPEAK OF THE BLACK ORDER.

WHAT OF THEM? WHAT OF THE TITAN'S BODY?

WHAT IS TO BE DONE OF THEM?

WHOA. WHAT'S UP, SPOOKY? SWEET PONCHO. HOW DO I NOT KNOW YOU? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM NO ONE.

SUPER COOL. HEY, IS THAT YOUR BIKE OUTSIDE?

YOU ARE A SKULL. ENGULFED IN FLAME.

YOU WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP A DISTANCE.

WE HAVE NOT TURNED A BLIND EYE TO THE BLACK ORDER, WRAITH.

THE COMBINED SHI'AR FLEET ARE SCANNING ALL QUADRANTS IN SEARCH OF THEM. THEY WILL BE FOUND. I ASSURE YOU.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAVE A MISSION.

WE MUST KILL GAMORA.

BEFORE WE CONTINUE, I MUST ASK YOU...

...IS IT GOING TO BE A PROBLEM KILLING YOUR SISTER, *NEBULA?*

NO.

CH-CHK

SHOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A PROBLEM.

VERY WELL.

BUT THE QUESTION REMAINS...

...WHERE IS SHE?

NO ONE, NOT EVEN THE SEERS I HAVE PERSUADED, KNOW OF HER LOCATION.

WE FIND HER THROUGH HER WEAKNESS.

THROUGH HER HEART.

GO ON...

SHE'S SENTIMENTAL. SHE WOULD TELL HIM WHERE SHE WENT.

WHO?

THAT IDIOT BOY SHE *LOVES*, OR USED TO LOVE. WHATEVER. WE FIND HIM AND WE RIP IT OUT OF HIS BRAIN.

VERY WELL. LET US BEGIN.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND THIS BOY?

OH, THAT'S THE EASY PART.

HE CAN'T HELP BUT STAY IN THE THICK OF IT.

WHEREVER THERE'S TROUBLE...

"...YOU'LL FIND RICHARD RIDER.
"NOVA."

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY *3

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 3

THE LILANDRA IV.
FLAGSHIP, DESTROYER OF THE SHI'AR ROYAL ARMADA.
SOMEWHERE IN THE BLACK...

YOU KNOW, I ALWAYS LOOKED UP TO YOU, THANOS.

RIGHT. WRONG.

IT NEVER MATTERED...

YOU WERE ALWAYS... CERTAIN.

ALWAYS SO *SURE* OF YOUR PLACE IN THE COSMOS.

AH, BUT YOU HAD IT EASIER, BIG BROTHER. DIDN'T YOU?

BORN INTO THIS WORLD TO KILL IT.

AS DESTINIES GO, YOURS WAS RATHER DIRECT.

BUT WHAT OF ME?

"EROS, THE LITTLE TITAN."

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALLED ME, DID YOU KNOW THAT?

(OF COURSE YOU DID.)

IT MUST FILL YOU WITH WHATEVER IT IS YOU CALL DELIGHT TO KNOW THAT OUR ENTIRE HOME PLANET, TITAN, AND EVERYONE ON IT IS KNOWN...

...ONLY IN RELATION TO *YOU.*

I WAS AN AVENGER ONCE.

I WAS A *HERO.*

AND NOW--

GLADIATOR TO EROS. COME IN.

GO AHEAD.

WE'VE FOUND **NOVA** *AND ARE MOVING INTO POSITION.*

GOOD WORK. NOTIFY ME WHEN YOU HAVE HIM.

I'M THE EMPEROR OF THE SHI'AR EMPIRE. YOU'RE ON MY SHIP. I DON'T WORK FOR YOU.

(BUT YES, I WILL NOTIFY YOU.)

GLADIATOR OUT.

VERY WELL.

LOOK AT ME!

HUNTING YOUR DAUGHTER. SACRIFICING A LIFE TO SAVE LIVES.

TRADING SOULS.

"BALANCING THE UNIVERSE."

HAVE I BECOME YOU, BROTHER?

...IS THAT MY DESTINY?

I HOPE YOU ARE PLEASED.

I HOPE THIS FINAL GAUNTLET OF YOURS HAS BROUGHT YOU SOME PEACE.

BECAUSE THE REST OF US...

"...THE REST OF US ARE IN HELL."

THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

ANNIHILUS.

LORD OF THIS ANTIMATTER UNIVERSE.

FIRST-BORN SON OF OBLIVION.

"THE LIVING DEATH THAT WALKS."

ADORABLE.

OH, I THINK YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT.

WHERE IS IT?

WHERE IS THANOS' *HEAD?*

HIS.

HEAD.

WE SHOULD KILL HIM NOW, YES?

NO, NO...

ANNIHILUS DOES NOT DIE...

...TODAY.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW HOW YOU DIE, BUG?

EVERYTHING DIES.

ESPECIALLY YOU.

I KNOW THE EXACT DATE AND TIME OF YOUR ONE TRUE *FINAL DEATH.*

I KNOW WHO KILLS YOU. I KNOW HOW THEY DO IT.

DEATH CANNOT BE STOPPED!

UNLESS I STOP IT.

NOW.

ABOUT THAT HEAD...

MEANWHILE...
ELYNOR-143. THE SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS OF SECTOR M.

AHHHHHHHHH!!!

N-NO... DON'T COME ANY CLOSER.

YOU NEED TO RUN!

NOW!

AGH!!!

ZWARK

STAY WHERE YOU ARE, RICHARD RIDER.

WE'VE DISABLED YOUR CONNECTION TO THE NOVA CORPS. NO ONE IS COMING TO YOUR AID.

THIS IS OVER.

JUST TELL US WHERE GAMORA IS.

NO.

KRAKA

THOOM

YOU'LL NEVER FIND HER! AS LONG AS I'M STANDING, NONE OF YOU WILL—

UNDERSTOOD.

THIS ONE KNOWS YOU.

YOU FOUGHT BRAVELY IN THE *ANNIHILATION WARS.*

PERHAPS YOU DO NOT REMEMBER ME.

I AM KNOWN AS *WRAITH.* BORN KREE. MADE *MORE.*

I CANNOT DIE. I DO NOT TIRE. I DO NOT FEEL PAIN.

I WISH YOU NO TRUE HARM, NOVA. YOU ARE A MEANS TO AN END.

I SEARCH FOR *KNULL,* THE EXOLON GOD. SO THAT I MAY FREE MYSELF OF HIS BLACK CURSE.

THE STARFOX HAS PROMISED INFORMATION FOR THE HEAD OF THE MAD TITAN'S DAUGHTER.

AGH!

I WILL BE SAD TO SEE YOU FALL. BUT I WILL DO WHAT I—

THAT'S ENOUGH!

WE NEED HIM ALIVE, YOU GHOUL.

YEAH, CAN WE...CAN WE ALL CALM THE HELL DOWN FOR A SECOND?

RICH. BUD. BUDDY.

YOU GOTTA THINK ABOUT THIS, MAN.

THANOS IS DROPPING HIS CONSCIOUSNESS INTO A NEW BODY. WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?

IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SOMEONE HE COULD GET TO EARLY.

THAT HE COULD GROOM. TRAIN. *MOLD.*

THAT HE COULD PLACE AT THE CENTER OF THIS WHOLE @#$%?&$ MESS TO CAUSE THE MOST DAMAGE.

WHO DOES THAT SOUND LIKE?

IT--IT DOESN'T MATTER. I'M NOT GIVING HER TO YOU SO YOU CAN KILL HER FOR SOMETHING SHE HASN'T DONE.

BUT SHE *HAS* DONE IT. RIGHT? OR DID I IMAGINE THAT LAST INFINITY STONE SAGA?

I DON'T WANNA KILL NOBODY EITHER, MAN.

BUT YOU GOTTA SEE WHAT THIS IS. YOU'VE FOUGHT THANOS. YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S CAPABLE OF.

IT'S TIME TO PICK A SIDE, RICH.

I...

...I HAVE.

BOOOM!

AFTER HIM!

ARE YOU KIDDING? THAT'S RICHARD RIDER, MAN. NO ONE CAN CATCH HIM. NOT EVEN *ME*.

LET HIM RUN.

NEBULA, IF YOU HAVE A POINT...

WE TRACK HIM.

HE'S BEATEN. HE'S OUTMATCHED. CONFUSED. BLEEDING OUT.

CUT OFF FROM HIS CORPS, TOO FAR TO REACH THEM. HE'S ALONE. HE'S SCARED.

WHERE DO YOU THINK HE'S RUNNING TO?

THE RYDER.
JUST. LIKE...
SOMEWHERE OFF IN SPACE, MAN.

QUILL! THE UNIVERSE IS FALLING APART!

QUILL! THE GALAXY!

QUILL!!!

I'M DEAD, GROOT!!!

PETER! THE UNIVERSE IS--

WHATEVER IT IS, JUST LET IT HAPPEN!

DAMMIT, QUILL. GROOT DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU LIKE THIS...

IT'S ABOUT YOUR *FATHER.*

THERE'S... BEEN AN ACCIDENT.

WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON WITH MY--

YOUR DAD IS FINE.

A SHAMEFUL RUSE, GROOT.

WHATEVER. LOOK, WE HAD A MEETING AND--

NOPE!

HEY! LISTEN TO GROOT!

WE'RE GOING TO SAVE HER, QUILL.

WE AREN'T GOING TO LET EROS AND HIS GAMORA KILL CREW HUNT HER DOWN LIKE THIS. SHE'S FAMIL--

SHE IS *NOT* FAMILY ANYMORE! SHE MADE THAT PERFECTLY CLEAR WHEN SHE ALMOST KILLED THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE!

WHEN SHE KILLED *ME!*

AND YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ALL GOING TO SAY. I DEFENDED HER THEN, RIGHT?

I STOOD UP FOR HER AGAINST ADAM WARLOCK AND... YEAH...I DID.

I DID.

WHAT CAN I SAY? I'M AN IDIOT, I GUESS.

BUT NO MORE. I'M DONE BEING PUSHED AROUND BY—HEY!

THIS ISN'T HELPING.

AND WE WEREN'T ASKING FOR PERMISSION.

CRASH

FINE! BUT DON'T COME CRAWLING TO ME WHEN SHE SELLS YOU OUT TO HER LOST UNCLE DESTROYO OR SOME OTHER @#$%.

YOU GUYS DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE SHE IS!

GROOT'S GOING TO TELL THEM.

THAT'S A FAMILY SECRET!

THEY'RE GUARDIANS NOW. GUARDIANS ARE FAMILY.

NO MATTER WHAT!

DAMMIT, QUILL.

GET IT TOGETH—

RUMMMMMMBBBLL

GROOOOOTT!!!

WHAT THE HELL? YOU'RE TAKING *THE RYDER*?!

WELL, YEAH. HOW ELSE WOULD WE GET THERE? WE CAN'T ALL FIT ON BILL'S HAMMER.

GROOT, I HAVE ALLOWED THIS INSANE REBELLIOUS PHASE OF YOURS TO GO ON LONG ENOUGH. YOU TURN THIS SHIP AROUND ***NOW***.

THAT'S AN ORDER.

PLAP-PLAP-PLAP-PLAP.

WHAT WAS THAT?

GROOT WAS DOING A FART NOISE. GROOT DOESN'T HAVE A TONGUE, SO GROOT CAN'T REALLY—

GROOT!

PETER QUILL, GROOT IS RELIEVING YOU OF YOUR COMMAND. STAND DOWN NOW OR GROOT'S SECOND OFFICER WILL ESCORT YOU TO THE BRIG.

WHAT? NO! YOU CAN'T-- WHAT SECOND OFFICER?!

SIT DOWN, PETER.

OH.

WELL.

RIGHT THEN.

YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE AN EIGHT-FOOT-TALL ASGARDIAN HORSE CARRYING A HAMMER, BILL. OTHERWISE--

OF COURSE, PETER.

STILL MY SHIP.

OF COURSE, PETER.

I NEED A COURSE, CAPTAIN GROOT.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WE'RE GOING TO *HALFWORLD*, MOONDRAGON.

THIS. THIS IS WHY. THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO DO THIS.

GAMORA...

...SHE'S GONE AFTER ROCKET.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #4

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 4

HALFWORLD.
ANCESTRAL HOME OF ROCHET RACCOON.
LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF THE DEADLIEST WOMAN IN THE GALAXY.

"OKAY, LISTEN UP, TEAM..."

...IT'S YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING...

...WE'RE HERE FOR ONE REASON. LET'S NOT OVERCOMPLICATE THIS.

A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO KILL OUR FRIEND FOR SOME DUMB @#$% SHE DIDN'T DO.

"LET'S GRAB HER AND GET OUT OF HERE. HALFWORLD LOOKS NICE, BUT IT CAN BE DANGEROUS. COPY?"

AYE, COPY. NOT TO WORRY, CAPTAIN GROOT. WE HAVE THE ELEMENT OF--

KTA NG

CHK-CHK

SURPRISE.

NOW THAT I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, ALLOW ME TO—

FLARK ME.

KRASH

GROOT, IT WOULD APPEAR OUR NOBLE MISSION IS PERHAPS UNWANTED.

GLAD TO SEE GAMORA IS DOING WELL.

YEAH, SHE SEEMS GREAT.

COME ON...

COME ON...COME ON...

GOTCHA.

HA!

FWAP

BEEP

KRAKOOM

THAT...

COUGH

...WAS IMPRESSIVE...

YEAH?

THEN YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS.

HEY! NO!

AGHI

GAMORA!

GROOT!

STOP TRYING TO KILL GUARDIANS!

BETA RAY BILL IS A GUARDIAN? I THOUGHT THEY WERE HERE FOR ROCKET.

SO YOU TRIED TO KILL THEM?

NO ONE KILLS ROCKET BEFORE I--

GROOT HATES THIS.

I HATE IT TOO, BIG GUY.

GROOT MISSED YOU.

GROOT MISSED YOU TOO.

(I LIKE THE PUNK THING.)

EVERY DAY I AWAKE UPON THIS TEAM, MY REGRET AND CONFUSION AS TO MY PLACE UPON IT GROWS IMMENSELY.

NO @#$%.

WAIT, WHY ARE YOU GUYS HERE?

THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE IS COMING TO KILL YOU.

AGAIN?!

IT'S THANOS. THEY READ HIS WILL.

OH MY GOD, IS THIS THE CONSCIOUSNESS RE-UPLOAD THING?

GROOT, IT'S AN ABSOLUTE FEINT. HE JUST WANTS TO RIP EVERYONE—

IT DOESN'T MATTER. EROS BELIEVES IT.

HE HAS A TEAM COMING TO KILL YOU.

AND WHEN THEY DO, WE NEED TO NOT BE *HERE*...

WE NEED TO NOT BE AROUND *HIM*.

GROOT...

I KNOW YOU MADE A PROMISE. AND BELIEVE GROOT, WE'RE ALL MAD AT ROCKET FOR WHAT HE'S DOING.

AND YOU HAVE GROOT'S WORD...

...AS SOON AS THIS IS SETTLED, GROOT WILL COME BACK HERE WITH YOU...

...AND WE'LL FINISH THIS THING TOGETHER.

NEW SHIP, *HUH?* IT'S AWFUL. I LIKE IT.

YEAH, PETER NAMED HER *THE RYDER.*

IS THAT ONE OF PETER'S PRETTY EARTH GIRLS?

GROOT HAS NO IDEA.

YOU COULD ASK HIM.

...

HEY, PETE.

GAMORA.

LISTEN... CAN WE-- CAN WE TALK BEFORE--

I'M... GONNA NEED YOU TO PUT THESE CUFFS ON FOR ME.

PLEASE DON'T MAKE THIS A THING.

FINE. BUT... PETER...YOU KNOW THIS IS JUST ONE OF THANOS' GAMES, RIGHT?

ISN'T THAT WHAT YOUR FATHER WOULD SAY?

YOU ARE DOING EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS. YOU KNOW THAT.

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ANYMORE.

PETER... I AM SO--

BOOM

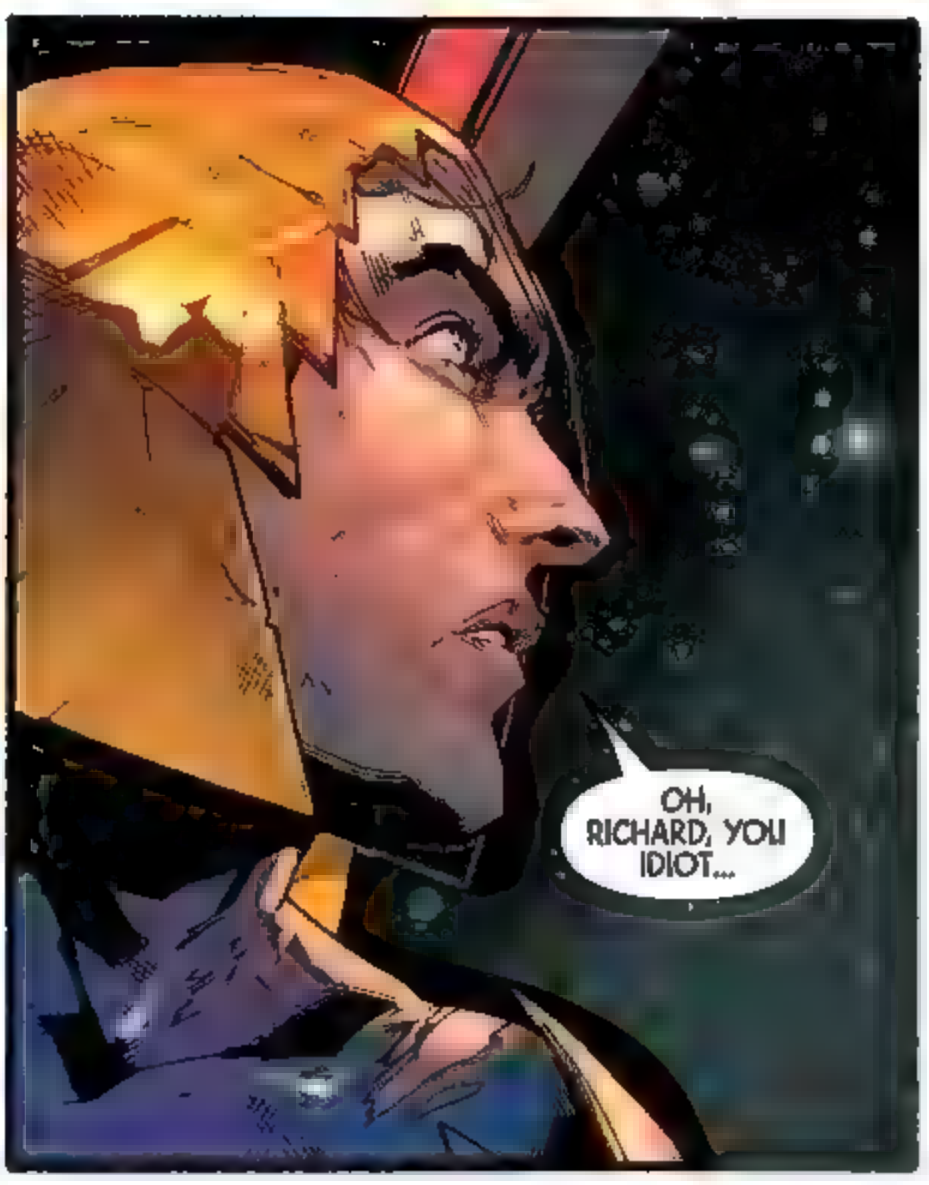
THE HELL WAS THAT? ARE WE UNDER ATTACK?

DON'T THINK SO. SOMETHING JUST SMASHED INTO THE SIDE OF US. IT'S...

AW @#$%...

NOVA! WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
THEY'RE COMING! PETE, YOU HAVE TO WARN...

OH. GAMORA'S HERE. WITH YOU...
OH.
OH NO...


OH, RICHARD, YOU IDIOT...

GUARDIANS.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DIE TODAY.

GIVE US GAMORA.

OR WE BLOW YOU OUT OF THE SKY.

YOU KNOW...I DON'T EVEN REALLY CARE THAT MUCH ABOUT THIS WHOLE THING.

SEEMS TO ME THIS IS GONNA PLAY OUT THE SAME WAY NO MATTER WHAT SOMEONE LIKE ME DOES OR DOESN'T DO...

...BUT YOU *DON'T* THREATEN MY SHIP.

IT'S GROOT'S SHIP ACTUALLY. REMEMBER? BECAUSE OF THE MUTIN--

DOING A THING RIGHT NOW, GROOT.

DON'T BE STUPID, QUILL. YOUR SHIP DOESN'T EVEN HAVE DEFENSES.

YOU HAVE NO WEAPONS.

HEH...

...LOOK CLOSER.

GLADLY.

WAAAAM

BOOM

DAMMIT! GROOT! FIND US A PLANET TO PUT DOWN ON!

BILL, GET OUTSIDE AND HOLD THEM OFF!

PHYLA, DRAGON, RICH-- YOU'RE WITH ME.

AFTER WE CRASH, I'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO SHOW GLADIATOR HOW UPSET I AM WITH HIS BEHAVIOR.

HEY! LET ME OUT OF THESE SO I CAN--

NOT A CHANCE IN HELL! YOU GO TO YOUR QUARTERS AND STAY PUT!

DID YOU JUST TELL ME TO GO TO MY ROOM?!

NOW!

FOUND A PLANET! BUT OUR LANDING HYDRAULICS ARE CRIPPLED.

CAN YOU FIX IT?

NOT WITHOUT A RACCOON.

WORRY NOT, FRIENDS. IT'S HANDLED.

YOU CAN FIX LANDING HYDRAULICS?

NO.

OKAY, GUARDIANS...

...LET'S GO TO WORK.

HAVE AT THEE, GLADIATOR! LET US SEE YOU WEATHER STORMBREAKER!

HA! NICE HAMMER. THINK I'LL KEEP--

KEEP IT AS LONG AS YOU WISH...

UGH!

...VE OTHER MATTERS TO ATTEND.

DAMN YOU, PETER.

HNNNGGG!!!

AHH!

AGHHHH!!!

HA!!! STOP PLAYING AND FIGHT ME, KORBINITE!

KRACK

AGHH!

HEATHER!

AGH!

VELL! VELL, ARE YOU--

YEAH... YEAH, I'LL LIVE...

I...JUST HATE... THIS %@#$%& UNIVERSE, MAN.

ENOUGH!

GAHI

I'M NOT GIVING HER UP, NEBULA!

I DON'T CARE.

WE'LL HAVE HER EITHER WAY. THIS IS JUST FOR--

BLAM

GET THE HELL AWAY FROM MY FRIENDS!

NO!!!

GAMORA! WATCH--

RAGHHH!!!

UNF!

SURPRISE.

GAMORA!

BLAM

PETE...

PETER...WHY--WHY DID YOU DO THAT? WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT FOR ME?!

HEH... I...I DON'T KNOW...

I DON'T KNOW... ANYTHING... ANYMORE...

LISTEN TO ME. NO. NO, PETER. KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN. LOOK AT ME!

PETER?!

...

PETER?

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #5

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 5

PETER.

CAPTAIN GROOT, I BELIEVE THE STAR-LORD IS BEYOND OUR--

NAH, HE'S FINE.

GROOT, HONEY, HE'S NOT--

PETER, QUIT BEING A BABY AND GET UP.

PETER!

I AM STAB!

KICK

AHH!

SEE? HE'S FINE.

ALL OF MY...RIBS ARE BROKEN.

IT'S A MIRACLE!

IT'S →COUGH← BODY ARMOR ACTUALLY...

SINCE WHEN DO YOU WEAR ARMOR?

YOU GET STABBED THROUGH THE CHEST WITH A SWORD ENOUGH TIMES YOU LEARN A FEW THINGS...

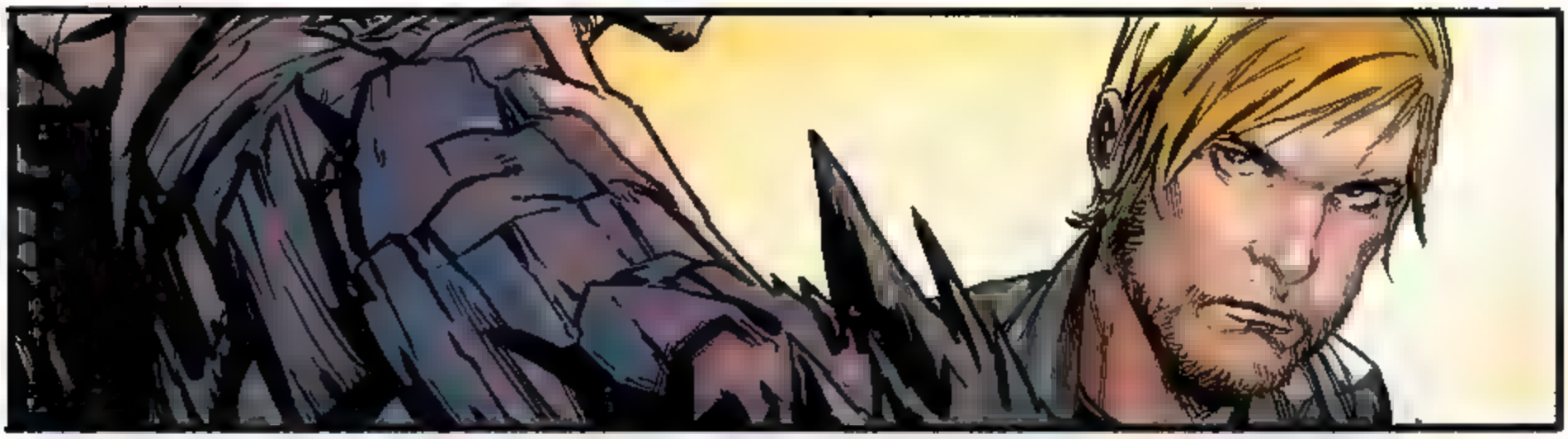
WHAT HAPPENED, GROOT?

DID WE...

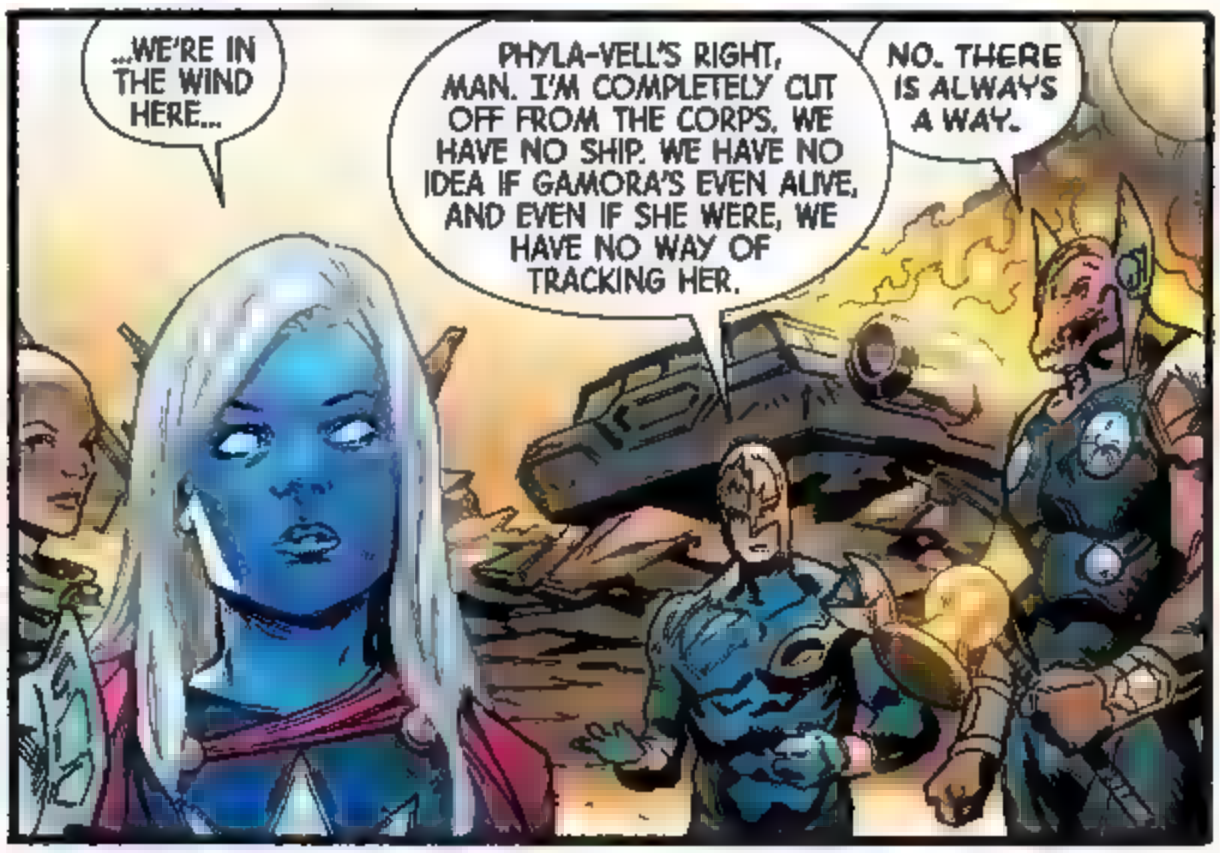
IS GAMORA...

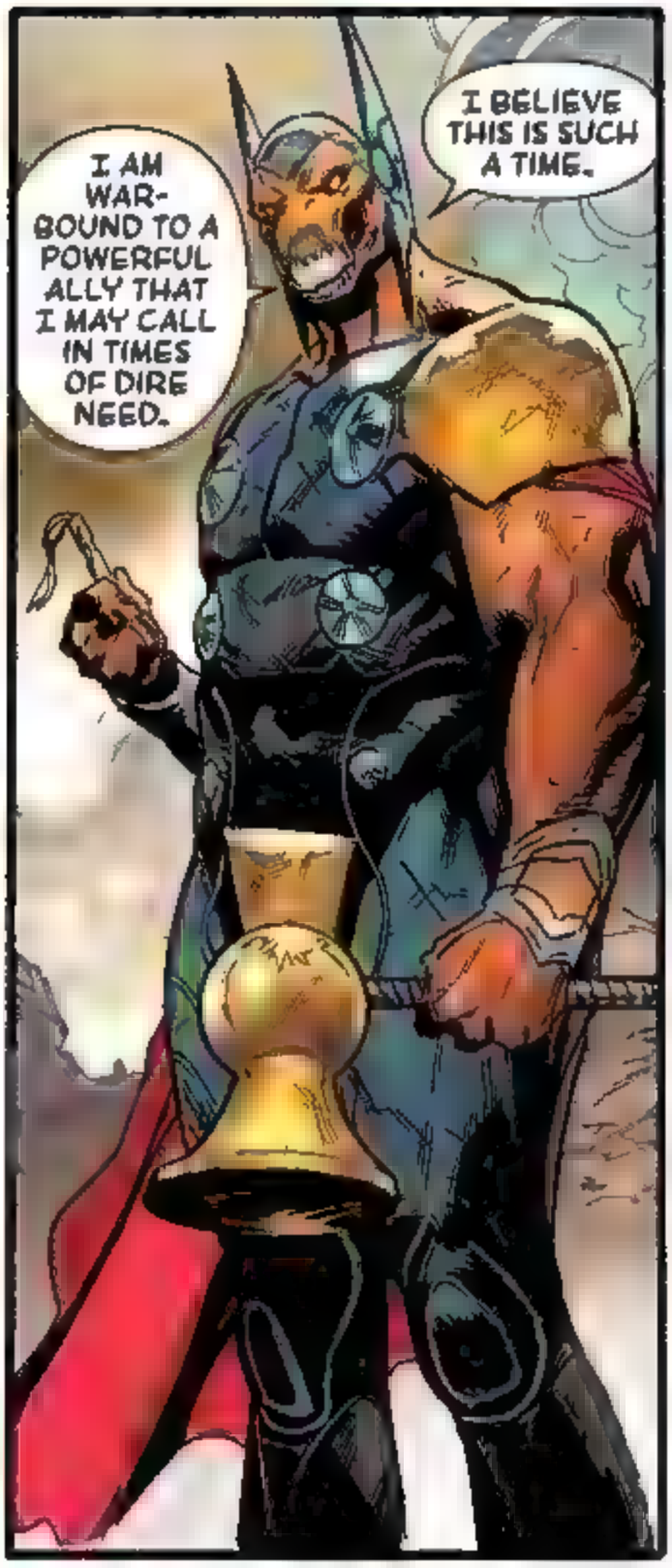
GROOT... IS SHE DEAD?

WE DON'T KNOW.



COME ON, LET'S ROLL. BILL, FIND US A WAY OFF THIS ROCK.
RICHARD, SEE IF YOU CAN TAP INTO THE NOVA CORPS AND--
PETER...


...WE'RE IN THE WIND HERE...
PHYLA-VELL'S RIGHT, MAN. I'M COMPLETELY CUT OFF FROM THE CORPS. WE HAVE NO SHIP. WE HAVE NO IDEA IF GAMORA'S EVEN ALIVE, AND EVEN IF SHE WERE, WE HAVE NO WAY OF TRACKING HER.
NO. THERE IS ALWAYS A WAY.


I AM WAR-BOUND TO A POWERFUL ALLY THAT I MAY CALL IN TIMES OF DIRE NEED.
I BELIEVE THIS IS SUCH A TIME.

WAIT...WHAT? YOU COULD HAVE CALLED *THOR* THIS ENTIRE TIME?! BILL, THAT'S AMAZ--

HA! AND WHAT WOULD THOR DO THAT BETA RAY BILL CANNOT, STAR-LORD?
NAY, WE HAVE WARRIORS. GAMORA IS LOST SOMEWHERE AMONG THE STARS.
WHAT WE REQUIRE NOW...

...IS A BLOODHOUND.

BWAMFF

...LOCKJAW?!

HAHA! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AS WELL, OLD FRIEND! TELL ME, HOW IS THE FAMILY? WHERE HAVE THEY SETTLED?

WOOF! WOOF WOOF!

AH, A FINE CHOICE. TELL BLACKAGAR I HAVE BEEN RECEIVING HIS MESSAGES AND I--

UHHHH, BILL?

THE HELL, DUDE?

LOCKJAW AND I HAVE BEEN WAR-BOUND ALLIES FOR SOME TIME. RECENTLY I ASSISTED THE INHUMAN FAMILY IN A RATHER... GRIM AFFAIR.

I'VE KEPT AN EYE OVER THEM SINCE.

WAIT, THAT'S GREAT! CAN WE GET BLACK BOLT OR SOMEONE OUT HERE TO--

BLACK BOLT NO LONGER HAS HIS POWERS, AND THE VAST MAJORITY OF INHUMANS ARE DEAD OR IN HIDING.

SLAUGHTERED BY A BEING NAMED VOX UNDER ORDERS OF A MAD BAND OF KREE.*

WAIT, WHAT? HOW DID I NOT HEAR ABOUT THAT?

NOT MANY DID.

*SEE DEATH OF THE INHUMANS! --DS

THIS IS WHAT GAMORA WAS WEARING WHEN SHE WAS TAKEN.

LOCKJAW, CAN YOU TRACK HER?

SNIFF SNIFF

WOOF!
HE SAYS YES, INDEED HE CAN.
HE ALSO WOULD LIKE YOU ALL TO KNOW THAT HE IS VERY SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH YOUR RACCOON FRIEND.
HE THOUGHT HIM A BRAVE WARRIOR AND IS QUITE SADDENED TO HEAR OF WHAT HAS--
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT. LET'S DO THIS IF WE'RE DOING IT.
VERY WELL, STAR-LORD. BUT KNOW THIS...BY THE TIME WE ARRIVE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT GAMORA MAY ALREADY BE--
I KNOW. DOESN'T CHANGE A THING...
DEAD OR ALIVE...

"...NO ONE @#$%S WITH THE GUARDIANS."

EARLIER.
ABOARD THE LILANDRA IV.
FLAGSHIP DESTROYER OF
THE SHI'AR ROYAL ARMADA.

HERE.

LET US BE DONE WITH THIS.

PICK HER UP!

THIS IS NOT HER FAULT, AND THERE IS NO NEED TO BE...CRUEL.

HELLO, GAMORA.

IT IS... GOOD TO SEE YOU.

THIS ONE WAS MADE A PROMISE.

YES, WRAITH. THE INFORMATION YOU ASKED FOR ABOUT THE BEING KNOWN AS *KNULL*.

THE INFORMATION ON THIS DRIVE WAS... DIFFICULT TO COME BY. I DON'T CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND IT ALL BUT... I HOPE IT BRINGS YOU SOME PEACE.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE BETTER THAN THIS, UNCLE EROS...

STILL PLAYING THE LACKEY TO MY FATHER...

YOUR "FATHER."

HE NEVER CARED ABOUT YOU. YOU KNOW THAT, YES? YOU WERE ALWAYS A PAWN FOR HIM.

SOMETHING TO BARGAIN WITH.

TO USE. HE MADE YOU FOR *THIS*. FOR THIS MOMENT. SO YOU WOULD BECOME HIM.

I DID BECOME HIM.

I GOT OVER IT.

DON'T PUNISH ME BECAUSE YOU NEVER DID.

"LITTLE TITAN."

...

ENOUGH.

GLADIATOR?

GLADLY.

EROS, NO! YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO--

HUSH. IT'LL BE QUICK.

NGGG!

HEY, MAN... I DON'T THINK--

THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH.

WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

AGHHH!!!

FWEH

KALLARK, I BELIEVE YOUR KIND DERIVES THEIR POWER FROM THEIR CONFIDENCE, YES?

I WONDER...

AGH... UGH...

...HOW STRONG DO YOU FEEL RIGHT NOW?

WELL, I FEEL PRETTY @#$%&# GOOD!

AH, THE RIDER.

I'VE HEARD OF YOU.

AGH!

ALL OF THAT POWER...

...IN THE BODY OF A DEAD MAN.

I...I'M...

...SORRY...

...MY QUEEN...

MUCH BETTER.

NOW...

...ANYONE ELSE?

THIS ONE HAS WHAT HE CAME FOR. HE HAS NO QUARREL WITH YOU, HELA.

DO WHAT YOU WANT WITH HER, YOU MISERABLE @#$%$...

MMMM...

OH-- GAMORA?

I COULD HONESTLY CARE *LESS* ABOUT HER.

...WHAT?

I'LL ADMIT MY TIMING WAS A LITTLE EARLY. THANOS AND I MUST HAVE GONE OVER THIS PLAN A THOUSAND TIMES...

PIT YOU ALL AGAINST EACH OTHER SO YOU WOULDN'T SEE THE PIECES COMING TOGETHER RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOUR FACE...

HONESTLY... THE GIRL?

DO TRY HARDER.

NO, THANOS WAS ALWAYS GOING TO COME BACK AS ONE THING...AND ONE THING ONLY...

A titan.

W-WHAT? NO, NO! NO, IT CAN'T BE! I'M NOT—

GRAAHHH!

AGHH!!! NO!!!

"LITTLE EROS WILL GATHER THEM," HE SAID..."TRY TO BE THE HERO IN THE SPACE I LEAVE HIM."

HE MADE YOU FOR THIS, EROS.

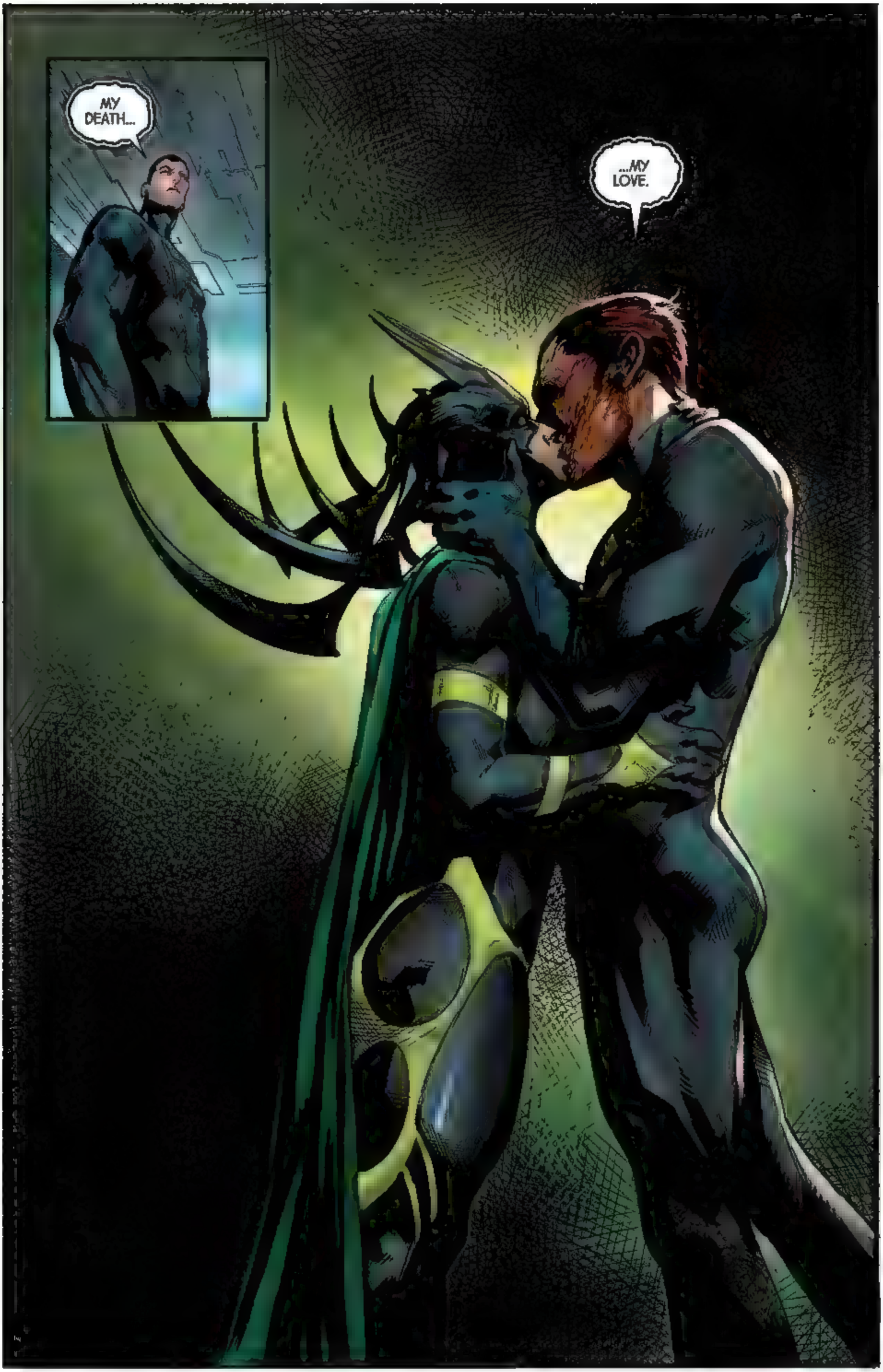
DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU LASTED THIS LONG ON YOUR OWN?

NNNGGG!!!

EROS... NO...

Y-YOU...

...CAME... FOR ME.


MY DEATH...
...MY LOVE.

LATER...

GAMORA!

PETER, SOMETHING IS WRONG...

GAMORA... W-WHAT...

WHAT HAPPENED?!

IT WAS EROS...

THANOS IS BACK, PETER.

IT'S OVER...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHERE IS HE?

HELA...THE BLACK ORDER... THEY--THEY TOOK HIM. WE--WE HAVE TO--

TOOK HIM? TOOK HIM WHERE?!

KNOWHERE.

THIS...IS MAGNIFICENT.

I AM IMPRESSED, MY LOVE.

YOU'VE DONE WELL.

YOU FLATTER. I ADMIT IT'S NOT PERFECT...

BUT THEN...

...GIVING LIFE ISN'T EXACTLY MY SPECIALTY...

MMMM, THIS IS STRANGE.

SEEING YOURSELF STARING BACK AT YOU?

NO... THAT I HAVE SEEN BEFORE.

I FEEL... SORRY FOR HIM.

MY BROTHER.

HIS FORM WILL NOT SURVIVE THE TRANSFERENCE.

A PITY HE WAS...NOT AN UNWORTHY ALLY.

ALAS...

WWAAAAA

RAGHHHHH!!!

VWA

AAA

KOOM

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #6

"THE FINAL GAUNTLET" PART 6

OKAY, LISTEN UP.

WE GOT PLAYED.

"THANOS UPLOADED HIS CONSCIOUSNESS INTO HIS BROTHER, EROS.

"AND WHILE WE WERE ALL CHASING OUR TAILS, HELA REASSEMBLED THANOS' BODY.

"NOW SHE'S TAKEN EROS TO KNOWWHERE. TO DO WHAT? I DON'T KNOW. BUT IT ALL ADDS UP TO A *NEW THANOS.*

"SO HERE'S THE @#$%&@# DEAL.

"I KNOW WE ALL HATE EACH OTHER AND WE ALL TRIED TO KILL ONE ANOTHER.

"BUT FROM NOW ON, AND UNTIL THE JOB IS DONE..."

...WE'RE ALL GUARDIANS.

LOCKJAW? TAKE US OUT.

BILL, DRAGON— YOU'RE UP.

AYE.

YUP.

RAGHH—

KNOWHERE.
THE FINAL GAUNTLET.

--AGH!!!

HA! YOU DON'T HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT--

KRAKOOM

RAGGHH!!! NO!

POUR IT ON, GUARDIANS!

HELA WILL BE BACK. AND WE CAN'T LET THIS GO DOWN ON OUR WATCH.

GLADIATOR, BILL, NOVA— TAKE THE BLACK ORDER DOWN.

EVERYONE ELSE, YOU'RE ON OUTRIDERS. GIVE ME SOME SPACE AND I'LL DEAL WITH—

I'LL DEAL WITH THANOS.

...

YEAH. FINE.

THEN I CALL DIBS ON *FRANK CASTLE.*

CAREFUL, PROXIMA MIDNIGHT HOLDS A WEAPON THAT MANIFESTS BLACK HOLES.

TRUST ME, I REMEMBER.

WAIT, WHICH ONE IS SHE?

THIS ONE.

GAAH!

BUT...

WHAT THE...

OH, COME ON, BOYS.

DON'T ACT LIKE YOU AREN'T IMPRESSED.

COME ON, CASTLE! FIGHT BACK, YOU TRAITOR!

PETER... NO...

PL-PLEASE... STOP...

WH-WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON...

HE-HELA'S HOLD...ON ME...

WEAKENING... I...I CAN'T HOLD TO-TOGETHER...

I'M... SORRY...

WHAT IN THE ABSOLUTE--

HELL.

AGH... WHAT... WHERE THE...

OH, NO WAY...

HI. I'M JOHNNY BLAZE. I'M THE KING AROUND HERE.

YOU MUST BE FRANK.

WANNA RACE?*

*FIND OUT MORE IN *AVENGERS #22!* --DS

RAH!!!

OKAY, DAD...

...LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN.

GAMORA! AGH, DAMMIT!

GAMORA, WAIT!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I TOLD YOU I WAS GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS.
WELL, YEAH...BUT I THOUGHT...
I DON'T KNOW, I THOUGHT MAYBE THAT MEANT YOU HAD A NON-KILLING-YOUR-UNCLE CREATIVE SOLUTION HERE...
OPEN YOUR EYES, PETER.
THIS IS THE *RESURRECTION OF THANOS.*
THERE'S ONLY ONE SOLUTION.
HEY, COME ON, NO! IF YOU KILL HIM, Y-YOU'RE DOING WHAT WE FOUGHT TO STOP!
IT'S NOT YOUR UNCLE'S FAULT HE WAS MANIPULATED LIKE THIS!
WE FOUGHT THE GALAXY TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM KILLING YOU BECAUSE YOU "MIGHT" BE THANOS...
GAMORA... IF YOU KILL EROS...
...YOU'RE JUST LIKE THEM...
THAT'S THE THING THOUGH, PETER.
IF I HAD BEEN IN YOUR SHOES...

...I WOULD HAVE KILLED ME IN A HEARTBEAT.

SKUNK

NO!!!

FWFF

UNCLE...

WHA- WHAT IS...

I'M...I'M SO SORRY. I HAD TO...

OH... IT...

...IT WAS ME. WASN'T IT?

WELL... THAT'S...THAT'S SO...

...FRUSTRATINGLY...

...OBVIOUS...

GAMORA... I'M SO—

RWWWMBBBLLL

RRRAAAAGGHH!!!

RAGH!!!

HUH...HUH... THANOSH...

THANOSH... LIVSH...

W-WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

THE PROCESS WASN'T COMPLETE... HE'S...HE'S NOT REALLY IN THERE...

OKAY. BUT DOES THAT MAKE HIM LESS SCARY OR--

NO!!!

YOU'VE RUINED HIM!!!

THE BLACK HOLE CANNON!

I SEE IT!

AGGHH!!!

KRAK-

KOOM

NAY!

KLANG

...no.

SHADOW

HUH?!

BEEP BEEP

I SAY THEE NAY.

WE...WE GOTTA GET OFF THIS STATION RIGHT THE @#$% NOW.

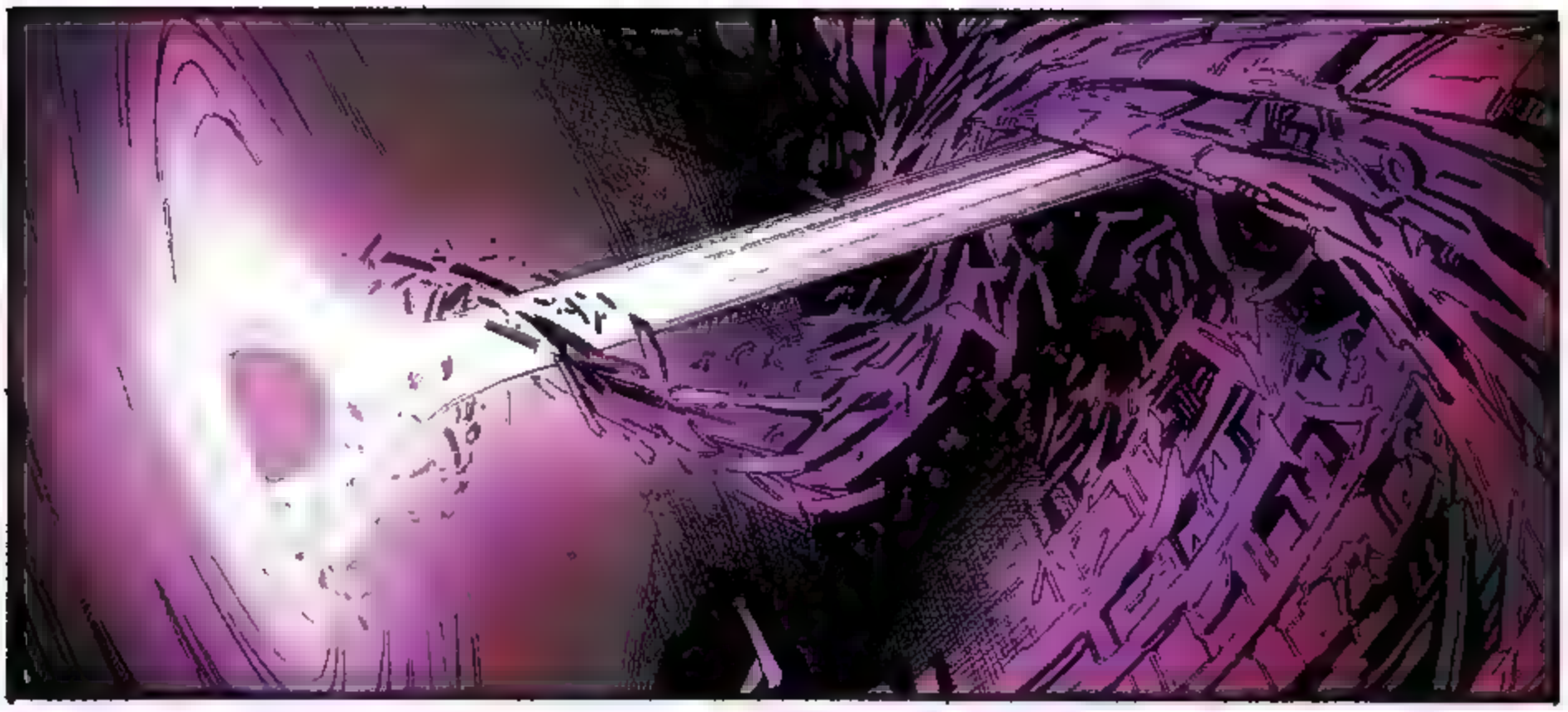
YEAH.

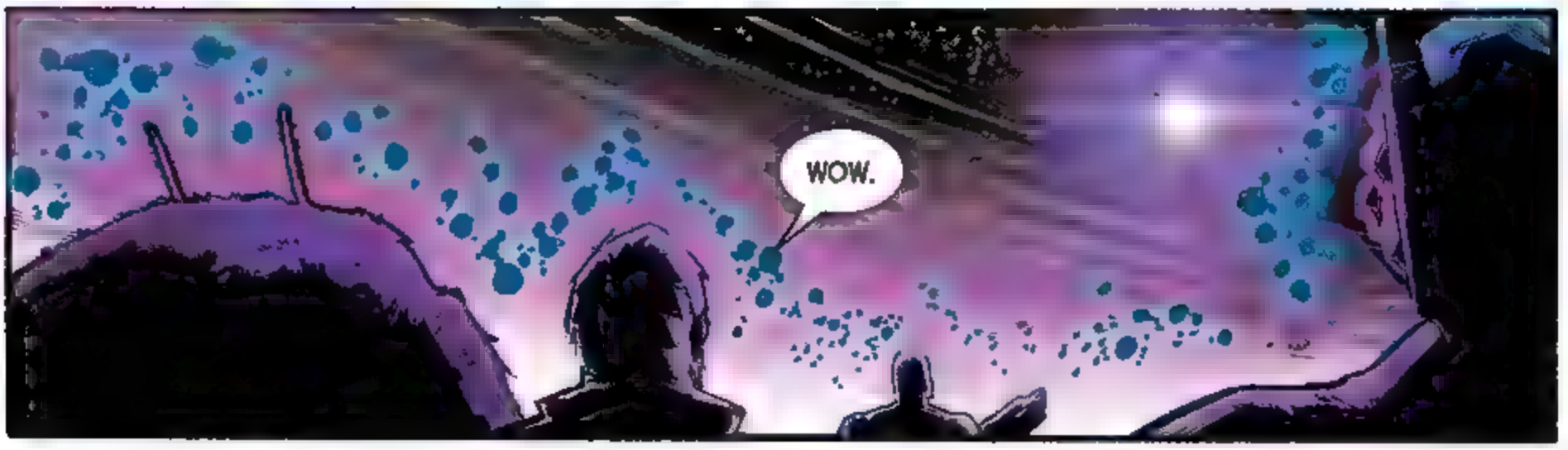
LOCKJAW!

ROOOAAAAARRR!!!

BWAAAAAA

NO!!!
NOOOAAAGGHH!!!




WOW.

GOOD BOY, LOCKJAW.

GOOD @#$%&% BOY.

A WORTHY BATTLE WELL MET, PETER QUILL!

SLAP

HEH... YEAH. OW.

YOU OKAY?

YEAH, BABE. I JUST...

YEAH.

OKAY.

HEY... ABOUT THE MUTINY...

IT'S FINE. I WAS COMPROMISED. I GET IT.

YOU DID GOOD, BUDDY.

NO, GROOT JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE WE WERE STILL COOL WITH GROOT BEING THE CAPTAIN AND—

SHUT UP, GROOT.

HEY...

WHAT DO YOU WANT? NEED TO PUT ME IN HANDCUFFS AGAIN OR--

GAMORA, NO. THAT PART IS OVER. IT'S ALL OVER.

PETER...

WHY DID YOU SAVE ME? IN THE BATTLE, WHEN I WAS DOWN...

I THOUGHT... I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME.

→SIGH←

I DIDN'T HATE YOU, GAMORA.

I HATED MYSELF BECAUSE EVEN AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE...

...I LOVE YOU.

I ALWAYS HAVE. EVEN NOW. AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT SAYS ABOUT ME. BUT I NEEDED TO TELL YOU...

...BECAUSE WE ALMOST DIE. A LOT.

PETER...

...I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THAT RIGHT NOW...

THAT'S OKAY.

NO ONE HAS TO DECIDE ANYTHING TODAY...

...LET'S JUST LIVE.

DOLO-MAYAN. WHERE COSMIC HEROES AND VILLAINS GO TO DRINK AWAY THEIR VICTORIES.

GUYS! GUYS!

I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY!

I'VE BEEN THINKING...

NOW, WITH THANOS GONE...THINGS ARE GOING TO START CRAWLING OUT OF THE COSMIC SWAMP TO FILL THE VACUUM HE CREATED.

COULD BE THAT THINGS ARE GOING TO GET QUIETER AROUND HERE.

BUT IF OUR COLLECTIVE HISTORY IS ANY INDICATION... ODDS ARE THEY WON'T.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S COMING. AND I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN BEAT IT. BUT WHAT I WANTED TO SAY...

...IS THAT... NOW, MORE THAN EVER, I'M DAMN PROUD TO CALL YOU ALL *GUARDIANS!*

I'M SORRY, BUT NO. I'M STILL THE MAJESTOR OF THE SHI'AR. MY PEOPLE AND I COULDN'T POSSIBLY...

I'M ACTUALLY ON CALL. I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE DRINKING. SORRY, PETE.

WELL, HELL. WE'RE STILL IN.

WHAT? HEATHER, WHEN DID WE--

PHYLA.

WHAT?

OBVIOUSLY I'M--

BYE, NEBULA.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I'M SORRY I TRIED TO--

BYE, NEBULA.

WHAT DID GROOT MISS?

ANOTHER MUTINY.

HA!

OKAY... SOOOO...

THAT'S... LESS THAN IDEAL...

WELL... I MEAN...

...WHAT ABOUT *ROCKET?*

NEXT: WHAT *ABOUT* ROCKET?!

REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1

"SEMPER FIGHT"

EARTH.
NEW YORK.

I'M DONE.

I RIPPED TIME APART TRYING TO KILL *THANOS*... AND I FAILED.

THEN I FELL INTO BEING A *GUARDIAN OF THE @#$%& GALAXY* AND ENDED UP SENT TO HELL.

AGAIN.

ALL IN ALL, IT'S NOT BEEN A GREAT FEW HUNDRED MILLION YEARS.

BUT IT'S OVER NOW.

MARIA CASTLE

I JUST GOTTA SAY GOODBYE TO SOMEONE BEFORE I LEAVE THIS ROCK FOREVER.

HEY... THERE YOU ARE, BEAUTIFUL...

BEFORE IT GETS ANY WORSE.

HEY, FRANK.

AH, @#$%.

GOT A SEC?

AH, FRANK. SO...

YOU, UH... YOU KNOW WHO I AM, THEN?

THAT'S...

OKAY...

YOU'VE BEEN RUNNING AROUND WITH THE *AVENGERS* SPOUTING OFF ABOUT BEING SOME KIND OF... FUTURE VERSION OF *ME.*

YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D HEAR ABOUT THAT?

NO. I FIGURED YOU WOULD...

IT'S JUST...

YOU'RE... UH, ACTING PRETTY CALM ABOUT IT IS ALL.

I WAS A FRANKENSTEIN ONCE.

I'M MORE OPEN-MINDED THAN I GET CREDIT FOR.

HA, THAT'S RIGHT! I FORGOT ABOUT THAT. MAN, THAT WAS...

HEHE, PRETTY FUNNY, YEAH...

RIGHT? SEE? PEOPLE SAY I'M A DUMB VERSION OF YOU, BUT THEN LIKE--

BOOM!

BOOM BOOM BOOM

AGH! WHAT THE HELL, FRANK?! THAT ACTUALLY HURTS!

CONSECRATED HELLFIRE ROUNDS.

YOU AIN'T MY FIRST GHOST RIDER.

YOU'VE ONLY HEARD HALF THE STORY, THEN.

GAHH!

SWAAAHH

YOU ONLY SURVIVED THAT BECAUSE I WANTED YOU TO.

I'M A FORMER HERALD OF *GALACTUS*, FRANK.

YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE.

NOW, YOU WANNA TELL ME WHY YOU'RE TRYING TO KILL ME OR--ARE WE GONNA KEEP UP THE--

AGH!

WHAT THE...

OW, DUDE...

VIBRANIUM AND ADAMANTIUM. TENDS TO DO THE TRICK.

YOU'RE NOT INVINCIBLE.

YOU JUST NEVER FOUGHT ANYONE WHO CAN FIGHT.

STAND DOWN, FRANK. I PROMISE YOU...YOU DON'T WANT THIS.

JUST TALK TO ME, MAN! WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU DID!

I KINDA DON'T!

RAGH!!!

YOU...

DAMMIT, FRANK! STAY DOWN!

THIS IS... ALL YOUR FAULT...

FLICK

NO!

BOOOM

YOU...

YOU REALLY ARE AN @#$%&#, FRANK.

G-GET UP.

WHAT?

UNGH!!!

ENOUGH!!!

HEY! HEY!

WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?! TELL ME!

YOU... WENT... BACK... IN TIME.

...COULD HAVE...CHANGED ANYTHING.

WHY DIDN'T... YOU... SAVE THEM?

NO... YOU...

YOU DON'T... WALK AWAY FROM ME!

ANSWER ME!!!

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAVE OUR FAMILY?!

...BECAUSE WE DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED TOO.

DON'T...

DON'T YOU EVER COME BACK HERE!

YOU HEAR ME?! YOU COME BACK AND YOU'RE DEAD!

DON'T WORRY.

YOU'RE DEAD!

YOU'RE...

I'M DONE.

THE END.

WOLVERINE: BLACK, WHITE & BLOOD #3

"BURN"

A FEW YEARS BACK...

SOME RANDOM BAR THAT'S ABOUT TO BE DESTROYED...

TRADR

DAM

GLICK GLICK GLICK

I LOVE THIS BA

DNK

SNFF SNFF

CASTLE?

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED...

YOU REALLY ARE THE BEST AT THIS @#$%, *HUH?*

I'D 'A THOUGHT WITH ALL MY COSMIC POWER AND GOING TO HELL AND TRAVELING THROUGH TIME, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SNIFF ME OUT.

BUT . . . DAMN, MAN.

ALWAYS

APR

"FRANK, YOU SMELL LIKE HATE, VENGEANCE, AND... HOT DOGS."

THAT'D BE THE GHOST RIDER FLAMESTEAD HATDOG.

"WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?"

AH, WELL...

IT'S PRETTY COMPLICATED. I'M FROM THE FUTURE

WELL... A FUTURE. I GUESS. I DON'T EVEN KNOW ANYMORE.

GLUG GLUG

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

MAN, BACK, LIKE, A MILLION YEARS AGO, WE USED TO HAVE THESE POKER NIGHTS YOU AND THE THING AND GAMBIT AND SOME OTHERS--

YEAH, WE HAVE THOSE NOW...

YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT

ANYWAY, YOU USED TO TELL US ABOUT THIS EPIC FIGHT YOU HAD.

TONIGHT AT THIS BAR.

SO I THOUGHT, @#$% IT. AS LONG AS I'M FORREST GUMP-ING MY WAY THROUGH TIME, I MIGHT AS WELL CHECK IT OUT.

WHAT FIGHT? AGAINST WHO? I DON'T SMELL ANYONE COM--

RUMBLE

BOOM

WOLVERINE!

KRSH

THAK

THAK

THAK

THUNK

DAMMIT! HOW DID I NOT SENSE THAT--

IT'S THAT GUY, BY THE WAY. JUGGERNAUT. THE BIG RED DUDE WHO CAME THROUGH THE WALL. THAT'S THE GUY YOU TOLD THE STORY ABOUT

YOU JUST GONNA SIT THERE, *HUH?*

HEY, MAN...

.. NOT MY STORY

SNIKT

GRAHH!

NOBODY STOPS THE JUGGERNAUT!

OOF!

THOOM

GLUG GLUG

BMF

THAK

OW!

CHOOM

SMASH

ALWAY

...

HMM.

THAT'S..

THAT'S NOT HOW THE STORY WENT.

WAIT...DID I @#$$% THIS UP BY BEING HERE?

AH. @##$%, I DID

IN THE STORY, OL' CLAWS OVER THERE WAS ABLE TO SENSE JUGGERNAUT. HE WAS READY FOR HIM.

BUT THIS TIME HE COULDN'T... BECAUSE OF ME.

BECAUSE I SMELL LIKE VENGEANCE...

...HATE...

...AND HOT DOGS.

BAR

WASSH!!

DUNK

THE HELL ?

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT NOTHING CAN STOP THE JUGGERNAUT!

OH YEAH?

AND THAT BLAST I HIT YOU WITH? THAT'D BE THE *POWER COSMIC*. SO IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING QUITE UP TO FULL POWER, THAT'D BE WHY.

BAR

YEAH, DON'T WEAR YOURSELF OUT, BIG GUY. THESE CHAINS ARE MADE OF THE BONES OF CYTTORAK. I'M SURE YOU'RE FAMILIAR.

KTHOOM

YOU TALK TOO MUCH.

KRAK

SNIKT

GAHH!

GET OFF.

FWP

CRACKED MY ARMOR.. WHAT THE HELL--

CYTTORAK CHAINS, *HUH?* THAT RIGHT?

HEY...MIND IF I BORROW THOSE FOR A SEC?

THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK...

KHACT

ON YOUR BACK, OUT-MATCHED, HEALING FACTOR DOWN...

BEEN THERE MYSELF, BUB.

LET ME HELP YOU SLEEP THIS ONE OFF...

N-NO...

WRNCCH

WHAT'S THAT, JUGGY? CAN'T HEAR YOU!

AGHHHH!

N-NO... PLEASE...

C-CAN'T-- DO THIS-- TO--

DAMAD

HERE

MEDICINE.

THANKS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. AND, BY THE WAY, WHEN YOU TELL THIS STORY, FEEL FREE TO--

I TOOK HIS ASS DOWN SINGLE-HANDED. WAY AHEAD OF YA, BUB.

SO . YOU'RE FROM THE FUTURE, *EH?* CAN I ASK YOU--

NOPE SORRY, MAN. I DON'T DO THAT.

NAH, NAH... I DON'T CARE HOW I DIE OR ANYTHING FIGURE IT'LL BE BAD EITHER WAY I JUST...

DOES THIS...

...DOES IT EVER GET ANY EASIER?

NO.

BUT YOU GET BETTER AT IT BEING BAD.

AND JUST . I'LL SAY THIS YOU GET A CHANCE TO BURN OUT OR FADE AWAY ...?

YOU @#$%&%$ *BURN,* BABY

KLINK

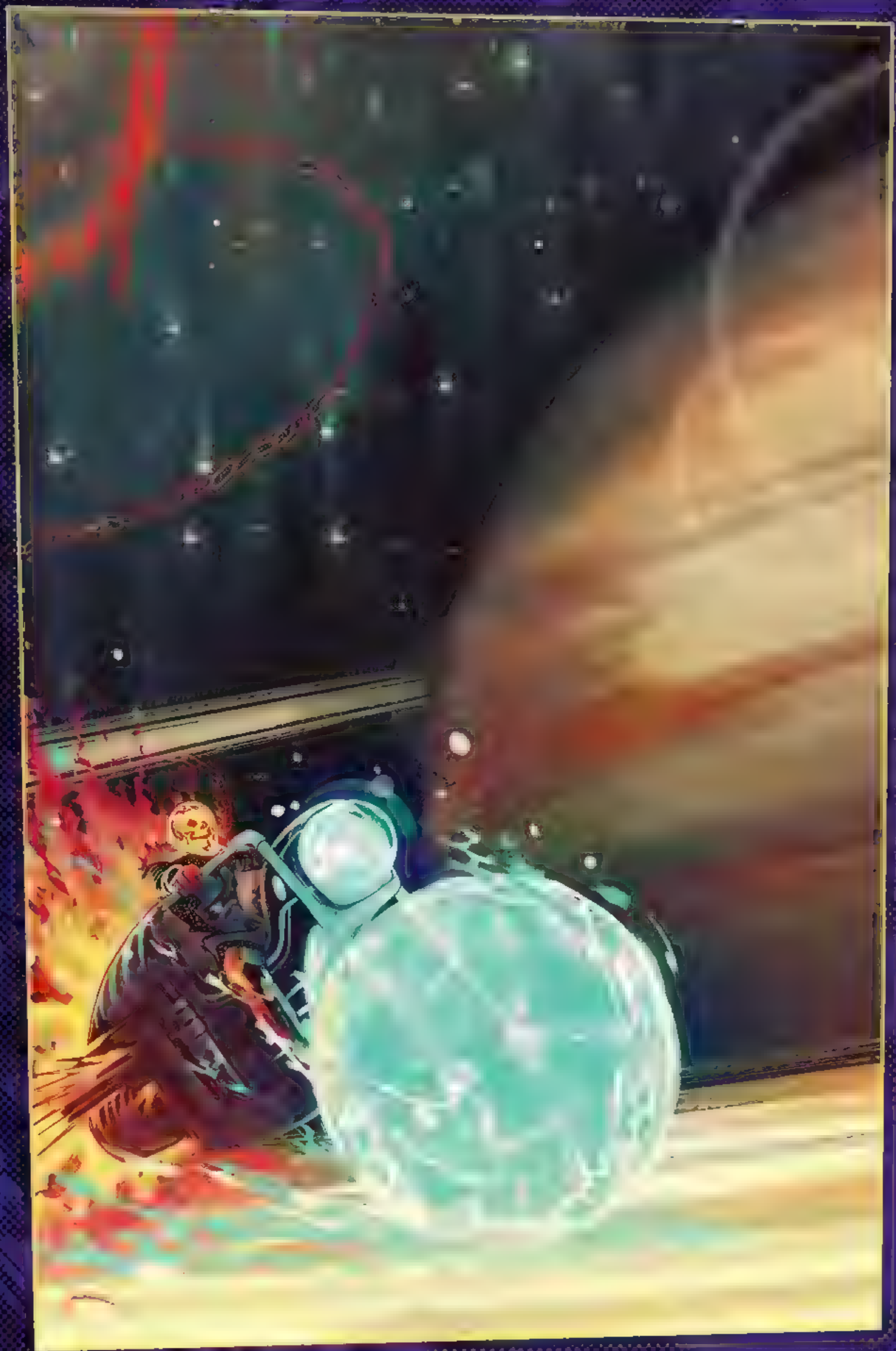
BURN.

CHRISTIAN WARD
THANOS #17 VARIANT

J.G. JONES
THANOS #17 VARIANT

MARK BROOKS
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

MIKE DEODATO JR. & EDGAR DELGADO
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT



STEPHANIE HANS
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

J. SCOTT CAMPBELL & SABINE RICH
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 SDCC GLOW IN THE DARK VARIANT

GERARDO ZAFFINO
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #2 VARIANT

SUPERLOG

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #2 VARIANT

IVAN SHAVRIN
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #3 VARIANT

DECLAN SHALVEY & TRÍONA FARRELL
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #3 VARIANT

SUPERLOG

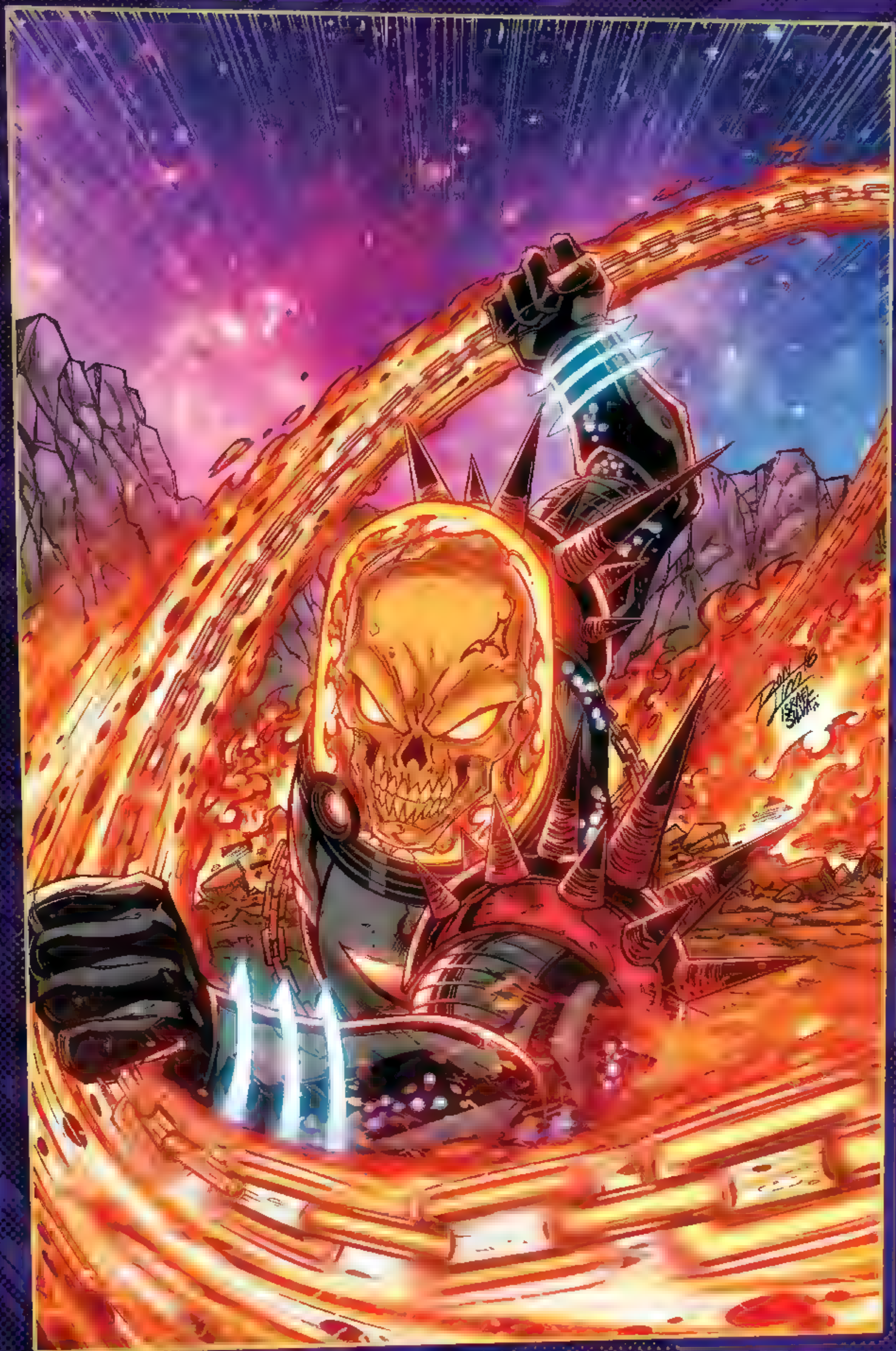
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #4 VARIANT

JAMAL CAMPBELL
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #4 NYCC PANEL VARIANT

SUPERLOG

COSMIC GHOST RIDER #5 VARIANT

IVAN SHAVRIN
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #5 VARIANT



RON LIM & ISRAEL SILVA
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #5 VARIANT

GEOFF SHAW & DEAN WHITE
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #1 VARIANT

GERALD PAREL
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #1 VARIANT

MATTEO SCALERA & MATTHEW WILSON

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #2 VARIANT

RON LIM & ISRAEL SILVA
REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

GERARDO ZAFFINO

REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

ADAM GORHAM & BRIAN REBER
REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

LOGAN LUBERA & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1 VARIANT

NICK BRADSHAW & MORRY HOLLOWELL
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #5 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

PAUL RENAUD

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #6 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

AKCHO

ASTONISHING X-MEN #15 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

TRADD MOORE

AVENGERS #7 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

MIKE McKONE & CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
AVENGERS #8 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

PASQUAL FERRY & CHRIS SOTOMAYOR

BLACK PANTHER #4 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

PATCH ZIRCHER & MARTE GRACIA
CAPTAIN AMERICA #3 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

TODD NAUCK & RACHELLE ROSENBERG

DEADPOOL #4 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

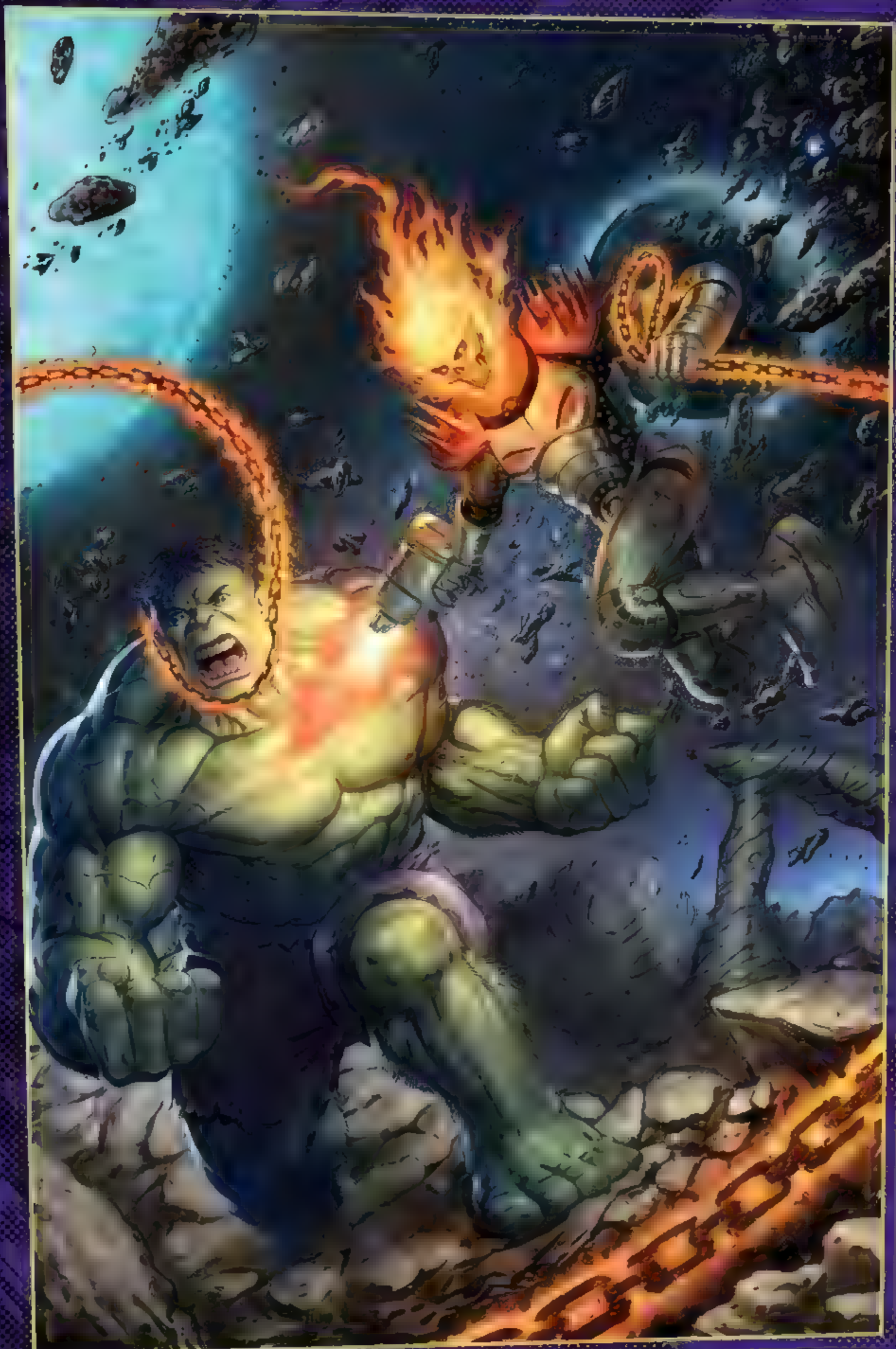
JULIAN TOTINO TEDESCO
DOCTOR STRANGE #5 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

TOM RANEY & MORRY HOLLOWELL

FANTASTIC FOUR #2 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

RAHZZAH

IMMORTAL HULK #5 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT



BRENT SCHOONOVER & WOO DAE SHIM

IMMORTAL HULK #6 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

VANESA R. DEL REY
SENTRY #4 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

DAVE JOHNSON & KELSEY SHANNON

THANOS LEGACY #1 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

EMA LUPACCHINO & JASON KEITH
THOR #5 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

DAVID NAKAYAMA

TONY STARK: IRON MAN #4 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

HUMBERTO RAMOS & EDGAR DELGADO
VENOM #6 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

CHRIS STEVENS & MORRY HOLLOWELL

WEAPON H #7 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

YASMINE PUTRI
X-23 #4 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

JAMAL CAMPBELL

X-MEN: RED #8 COSMIC GHOST RIDER VS. VARIANT

GEOFF SHAW
THANOS #16, PAGE 10 ART

DYLAN BURNETT
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1, PAGE 20 ART

DYLAN BURNETT
COSMIC GHOST RIDER #5, PAGE 16 ART

THANOS' NEWEST ENFORCER IS MARVEL'S MOST OUTRAGEOUS BREAKOUT CHARACTER!

MILLENNIA AGO, HE WAS FRANK CASTLE, THE PUNISHER. A deal with the devil made him the **GHOST RIDER**. An alliance with **GALACTUS** made him cosmic. And a bargain with **THANOS** made him...dead?! Don't worry, **COSMIC GHOST RIDER** has a time-travel plan for revenge – but can even Frank kill baby Thanos?! Plus: As cosmic war rages and a new hunt for Thanos begins, will Cosmic Ghost Rider answer the call and join the Guardians of the Galaxy?! Presenting all of Donny Cates' flaming-hot tales of the far-out future Frank Castle!

COLLECTING ***THANOS (2016) #13-18, COSMIC GHOST RIDER (2018) #1-5, GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY (2019) #1-6, THANOS ANNUAL (2018) #1,*** AND MATERIAL FROM ***REVENGE OF THE COSMIC GHOST RIDER #1, THANOS LEGACY*** AND ***WOLVERINE: BLACK, WHITE & BLOOD #3*** – BY DONNY CATES, CHRISTOPHER HASTINGS, KIERON GILLEN, KATIE COOK, RYAN NORTH, AL EWING, GEOFF SHAW, FLAVIANO, ANDRÉ LIMA ARAÚJO, WILL ROBSON, FRAZER IRVING, DYLAN BURNETT, BRIAN LEVEL, CHRIS BACHALO, ANTONIO FABELA, FEDERICO BLEE, CHRIS O'HALLORAN, HEATHER BRECKEL, RACHELLE ROSENBERG, MARTE GRACIA, DAVID CURIEL, MATT MILLA AND JORDAN BOYD.

T+

MARVEL